

TALES OF NARADA

Sage Narada symbolises unqualified devotion to Lord Vishnu, also known as Narayana. He is inseparable from his veena and has the name of Lord Narayana always on his lips. In the Puranic stories, it is Narada who puts the Lord's devotees to test. But when he himself is put to test will the celestial sage emerge victorious?

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TALES OF NARADA

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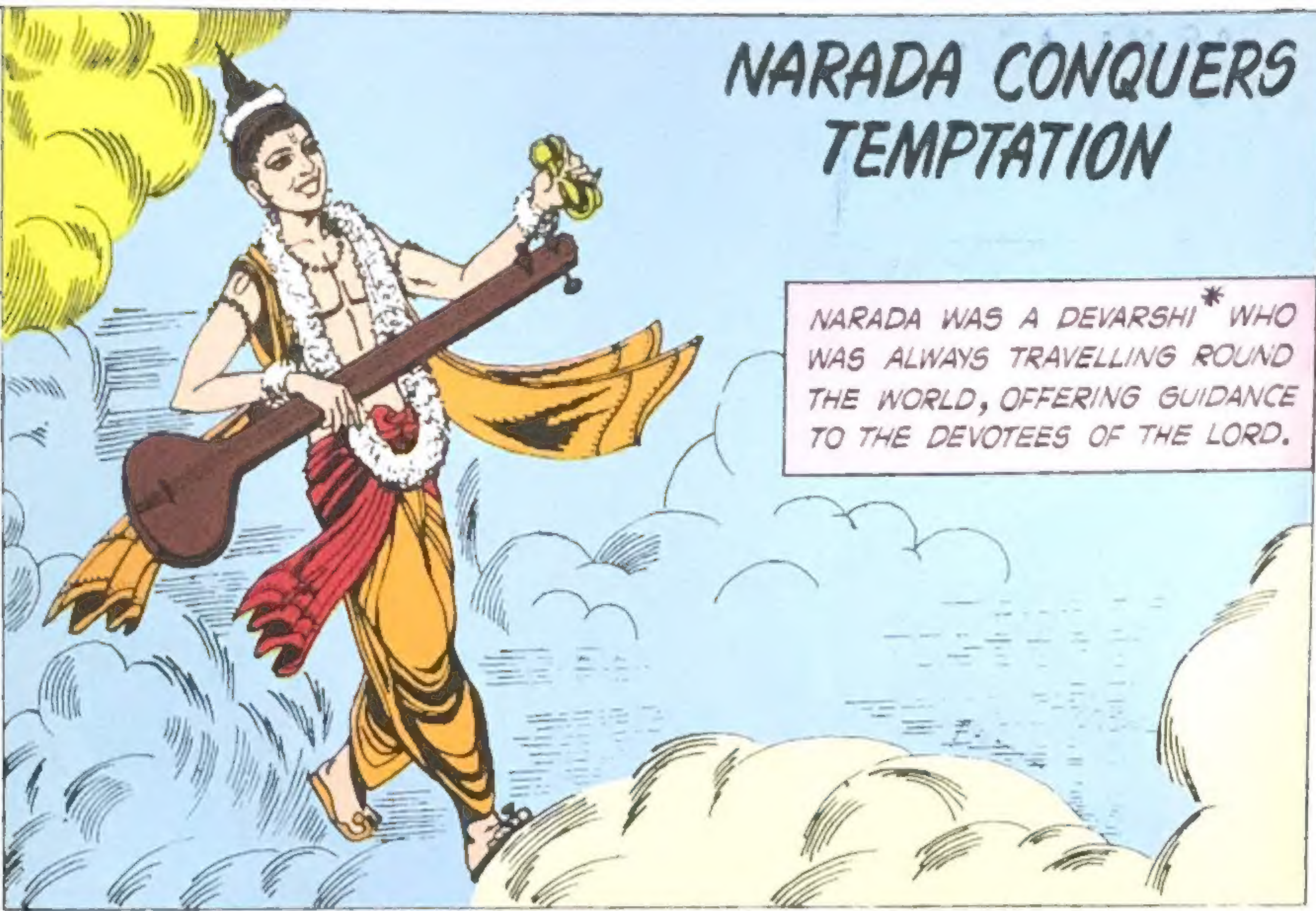
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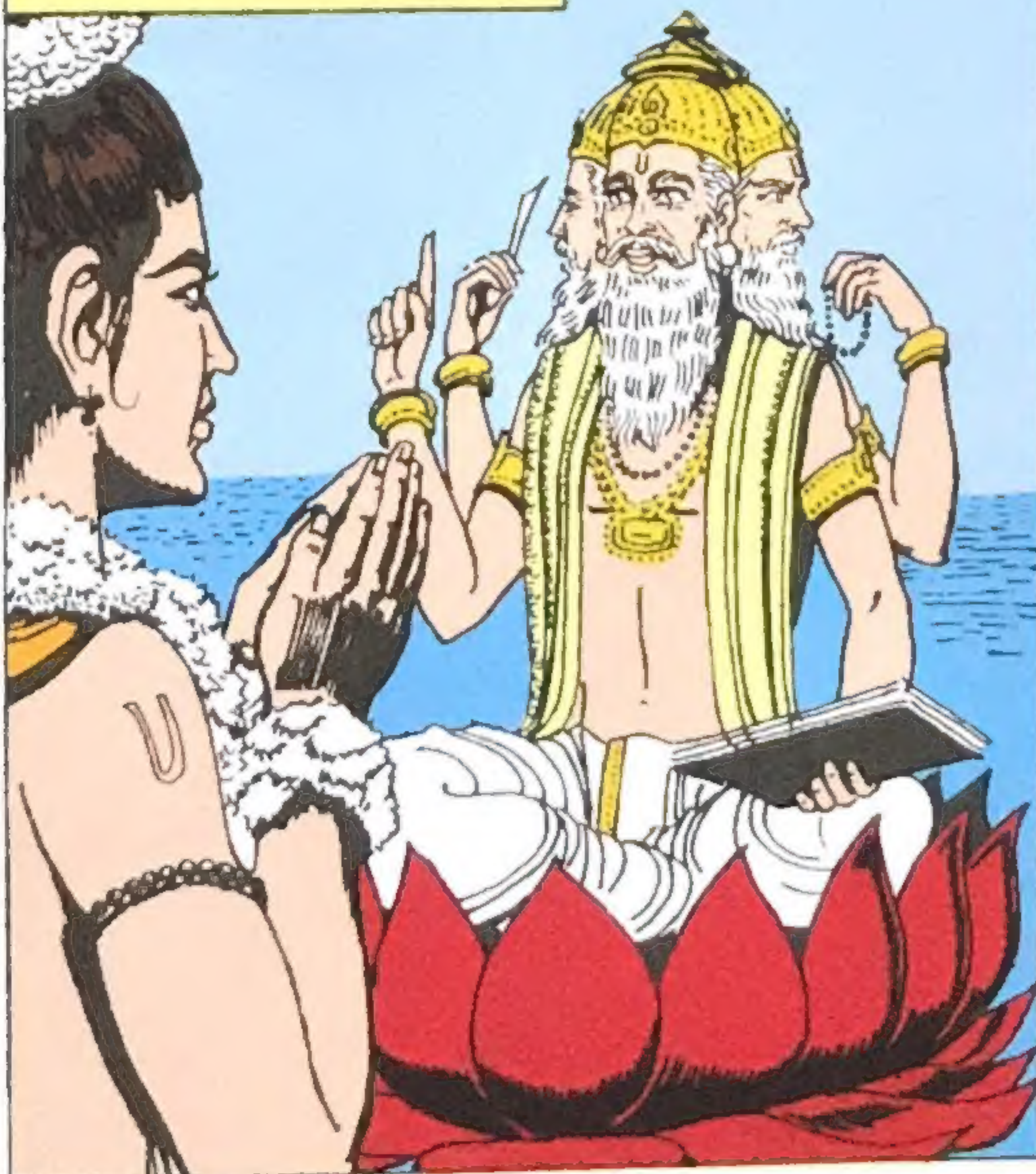
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NARADA CONQUERS TEMPTATION

NARADA WAS A DEVARSHI* WHO WAS ALWAYS TRAVELLING ROUND THE WORLD, OFFERING GUIDANCE TO THE DEVOTEES OF THE LORD.

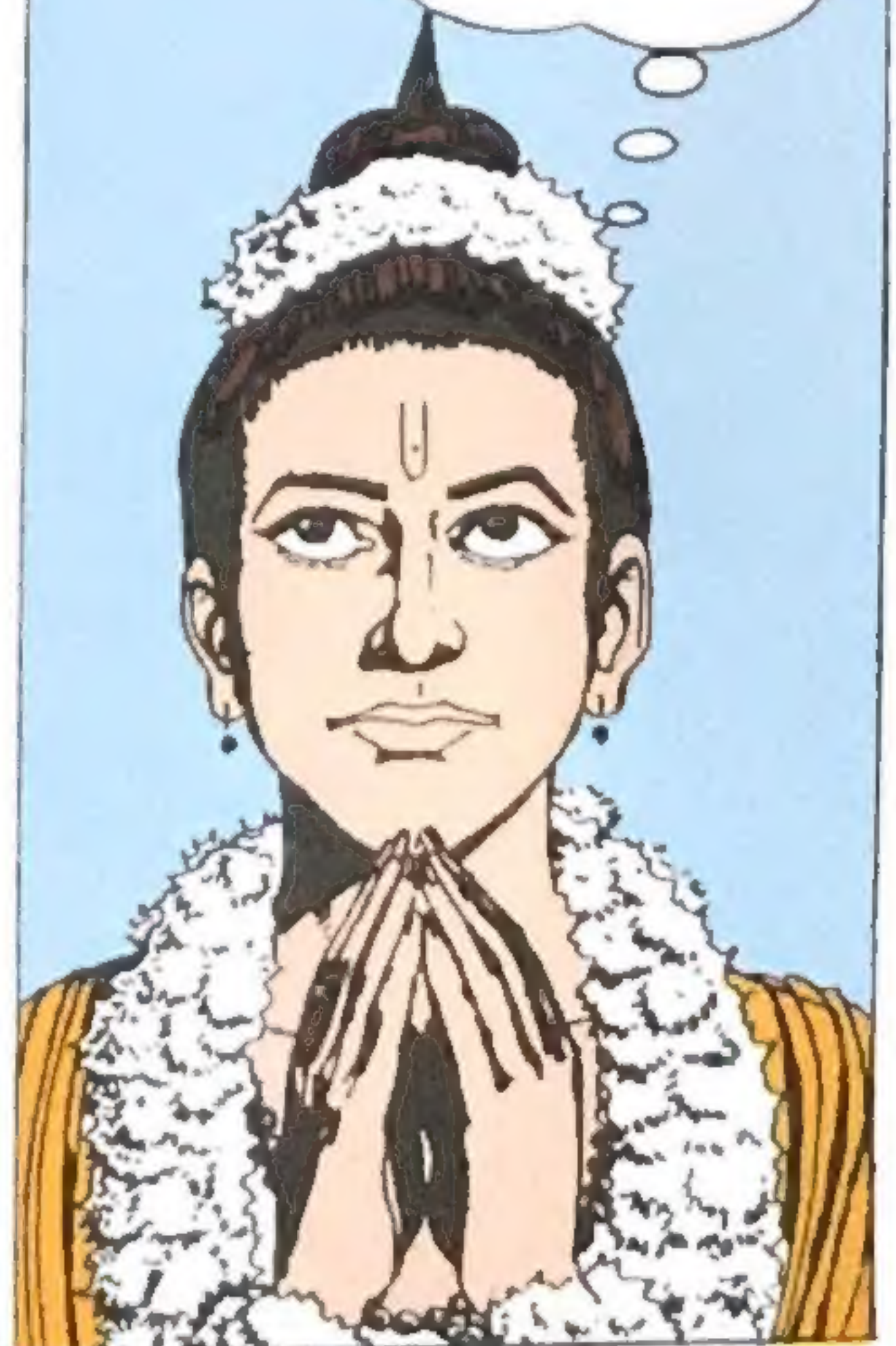


AFTER HAVING GAINED TRUE KNOWLEDGE FROM HIS FATHER, BRAHMA...



... HE TOOK THE VOW OF CELIBACY.

I SHALL NOT MARRY. I WILL SERVE LORD NARAYANA.+



NARADA PRACTISED SEVERE AUSTERITIES IN THE HIMALAYAS.



INDRA, KING OF THE DEVAS, BECAME SUSPICIOUS OF NARADA'S MOTIVES. HE SPOKE TO BRIHASPATI * ABOUT IT.



I WONDER WHAT HE IS AFTER.

IT COULD BE YOUR THRONE.

WHAT SHALL I DO?
AH! I COULD TEMPT HIM
WITH WORLDLY PLEASURES
AND MAKE HIM SWERVE
FROM HIS PATH.



WITH THIS IN MIND, INDRA SENT FOR KAMADEVA.*

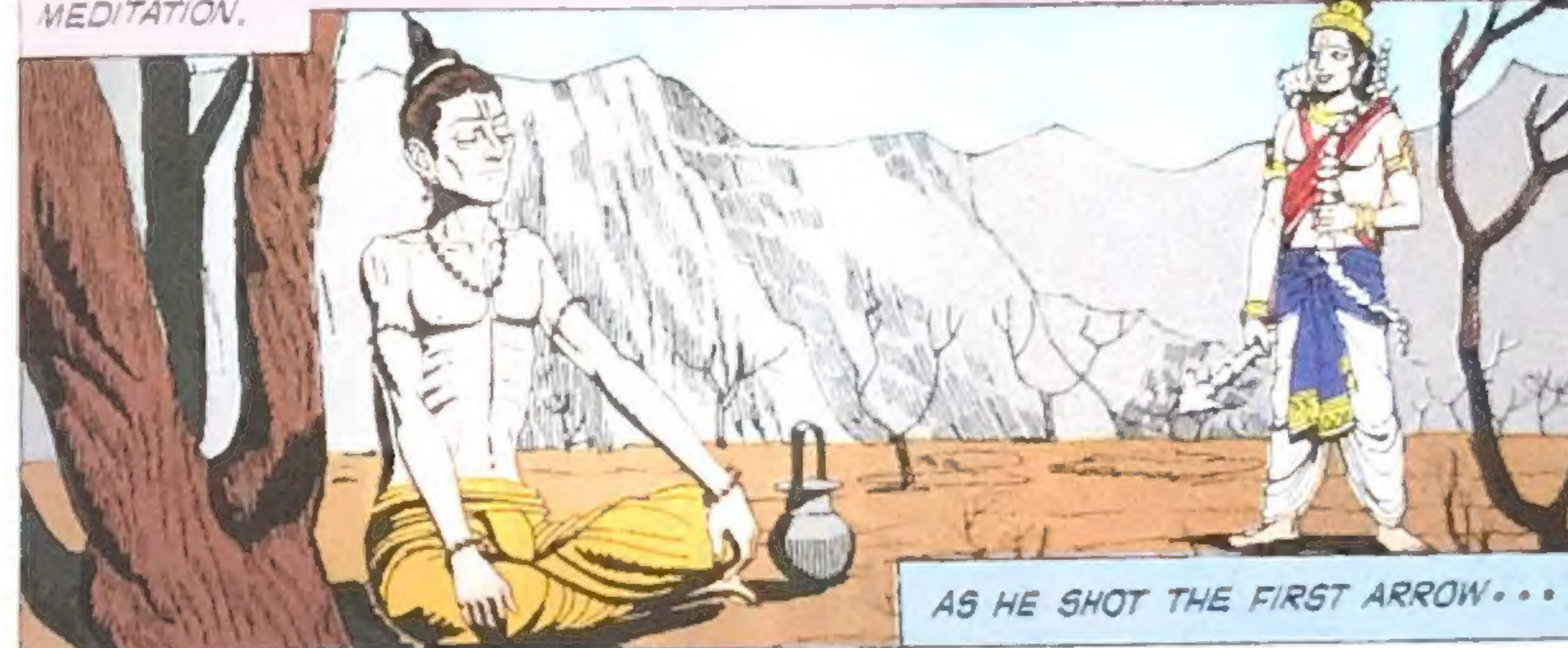


KAMA,
I NEED YOUR HELP.
YOU MUST MAKE
NARADA GIVE UP
HIS AUSTERITIES.

I'LL TRY,
MY LORD.

*THE ROYAL PRECEPTOR OF THE DEVAS * * THE GOD OF LOVE

KAMA CAME TO THE COLD, BARREN SPOT WHERE NARADA WAS SITTING, DEEP IN MEDITATION.

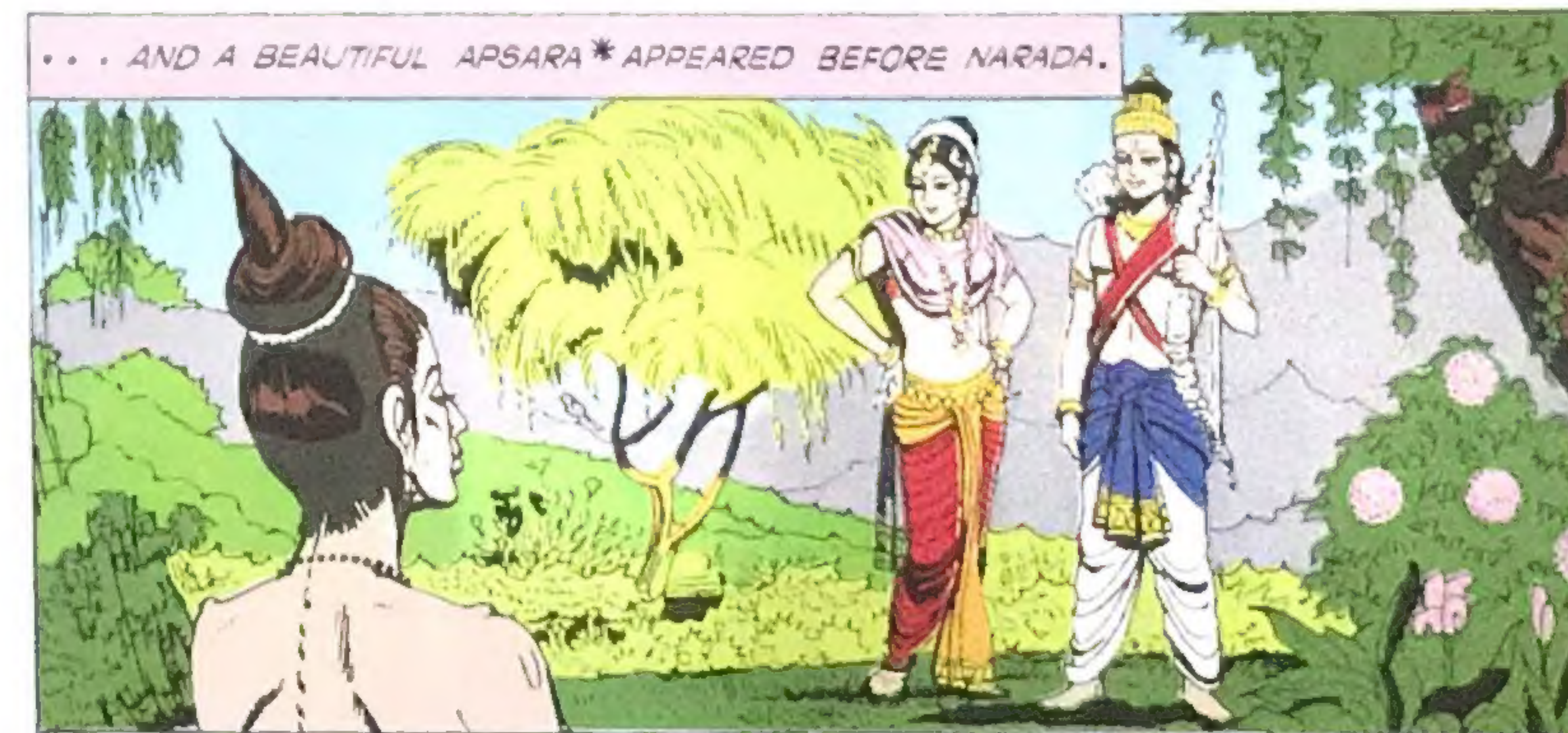


AS HE SHOT THE FIRST ARROW...

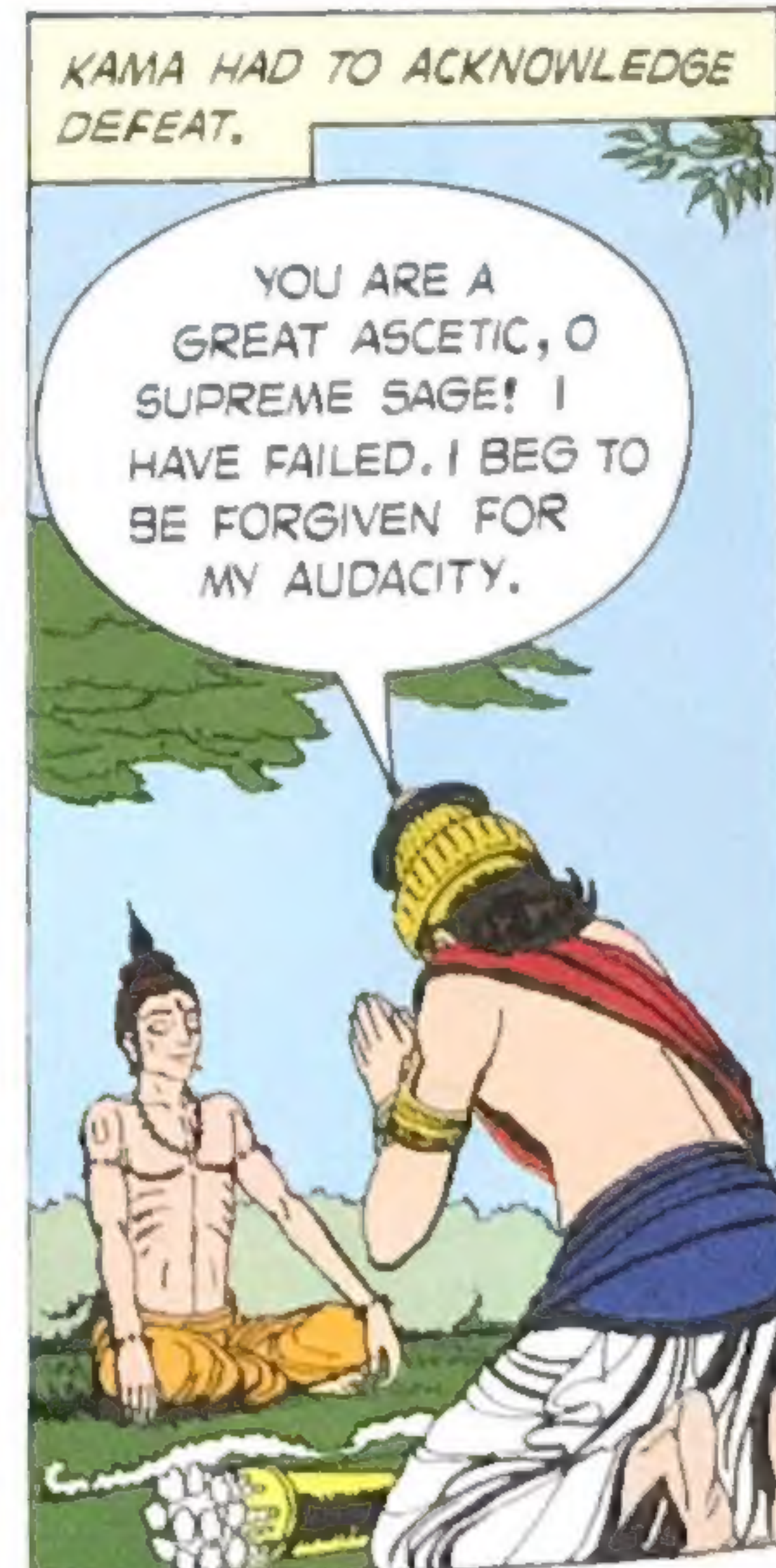
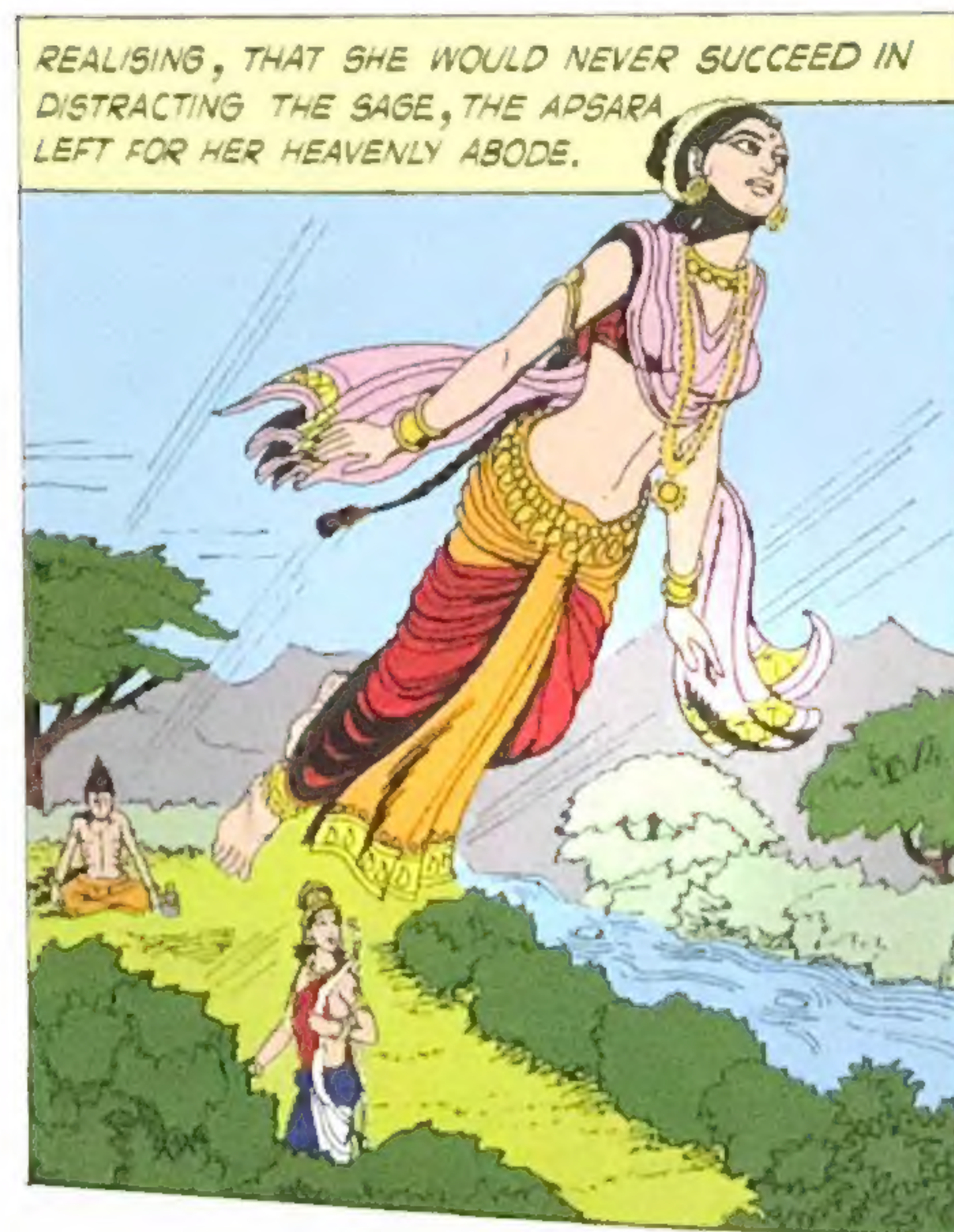
...THE SCENE SUDDENLY CHANGED...

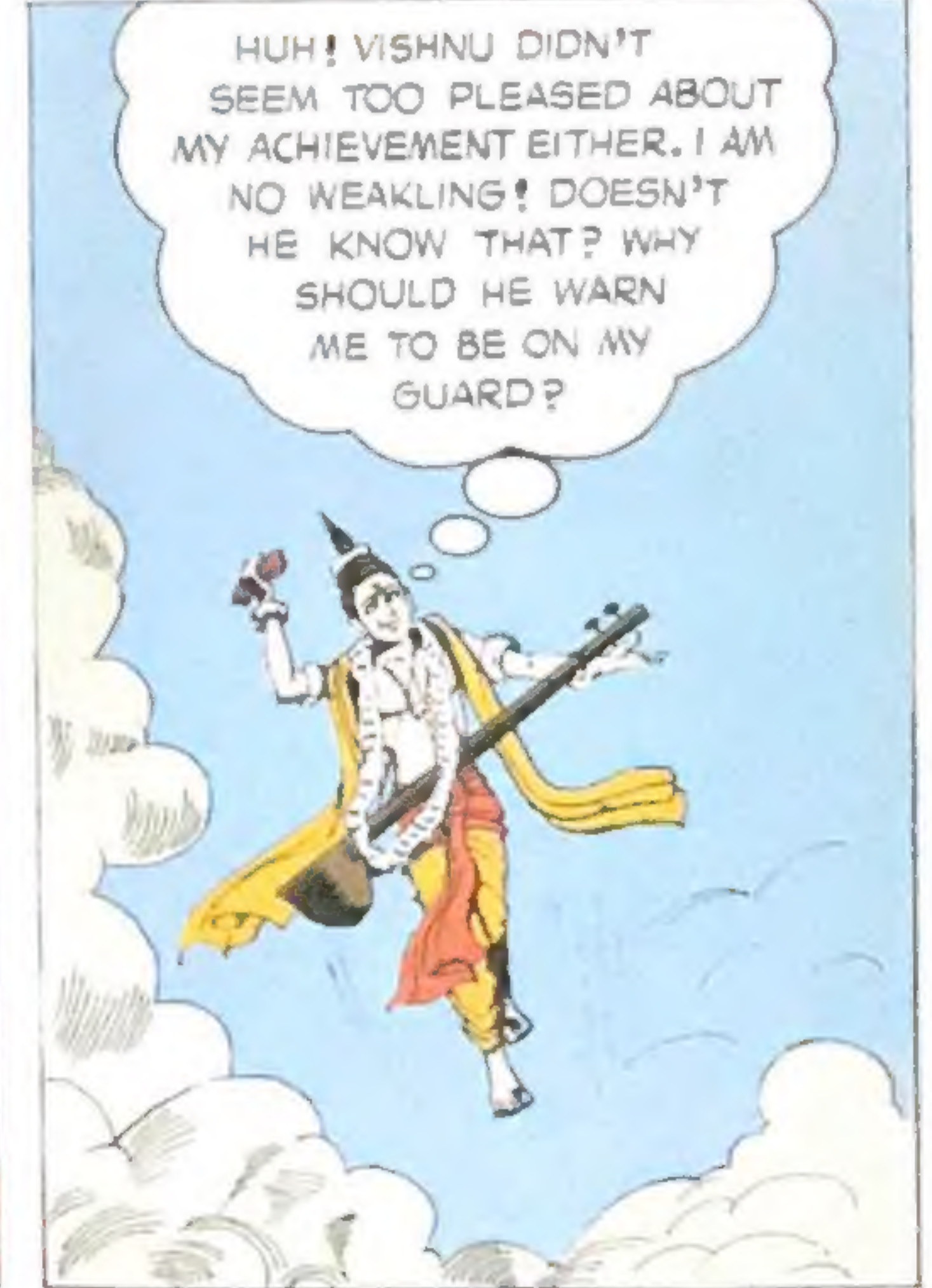
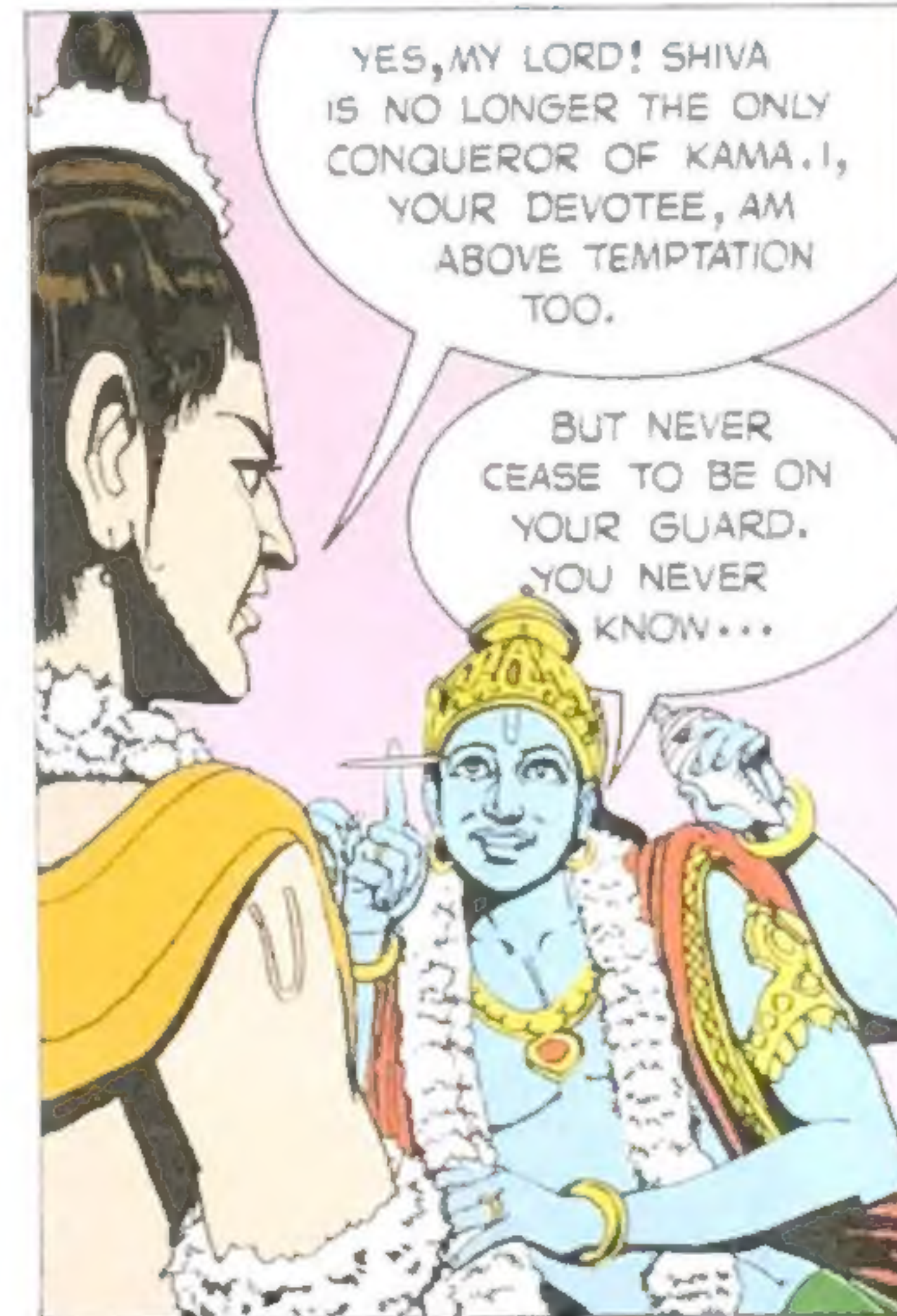
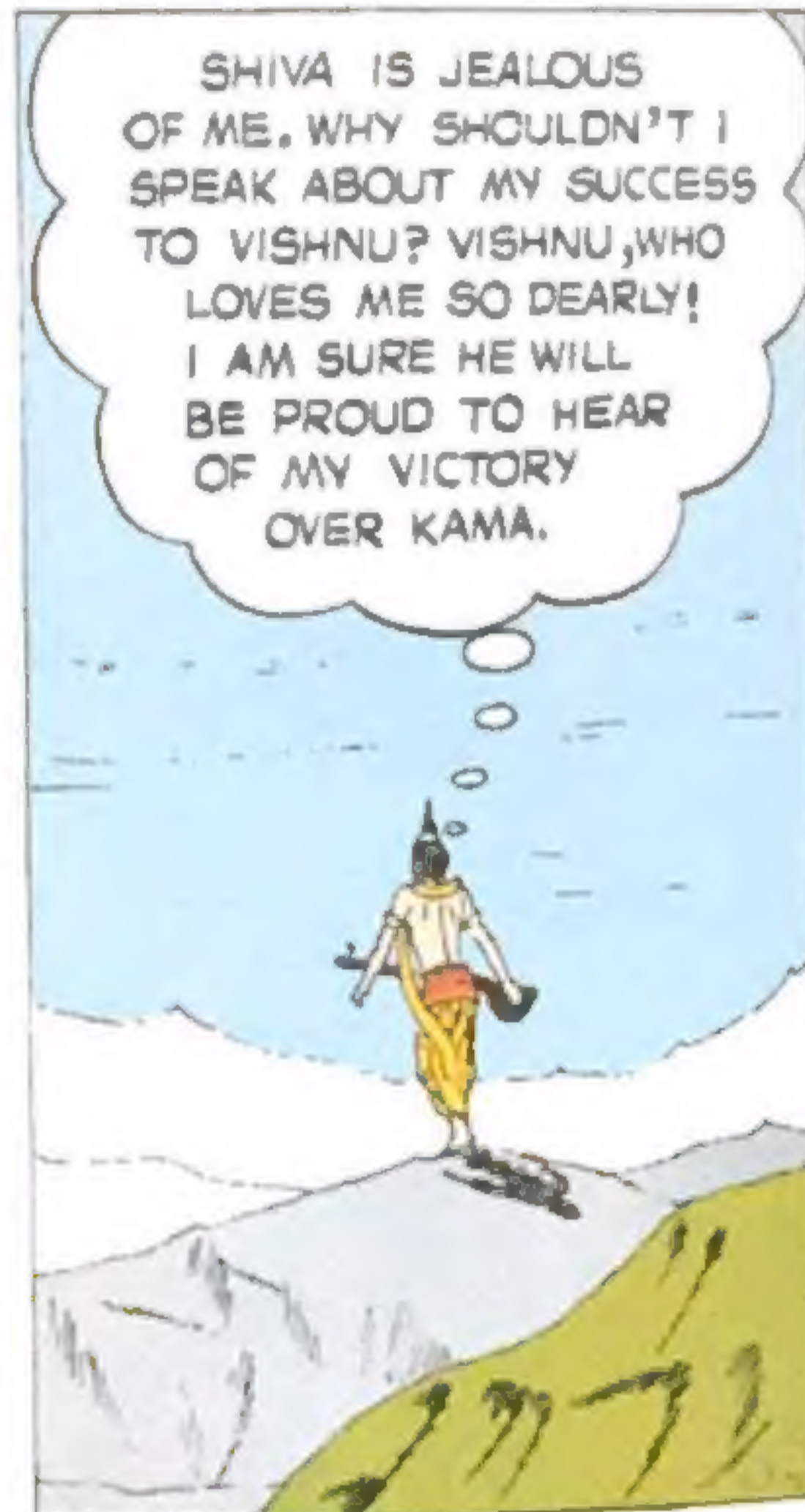


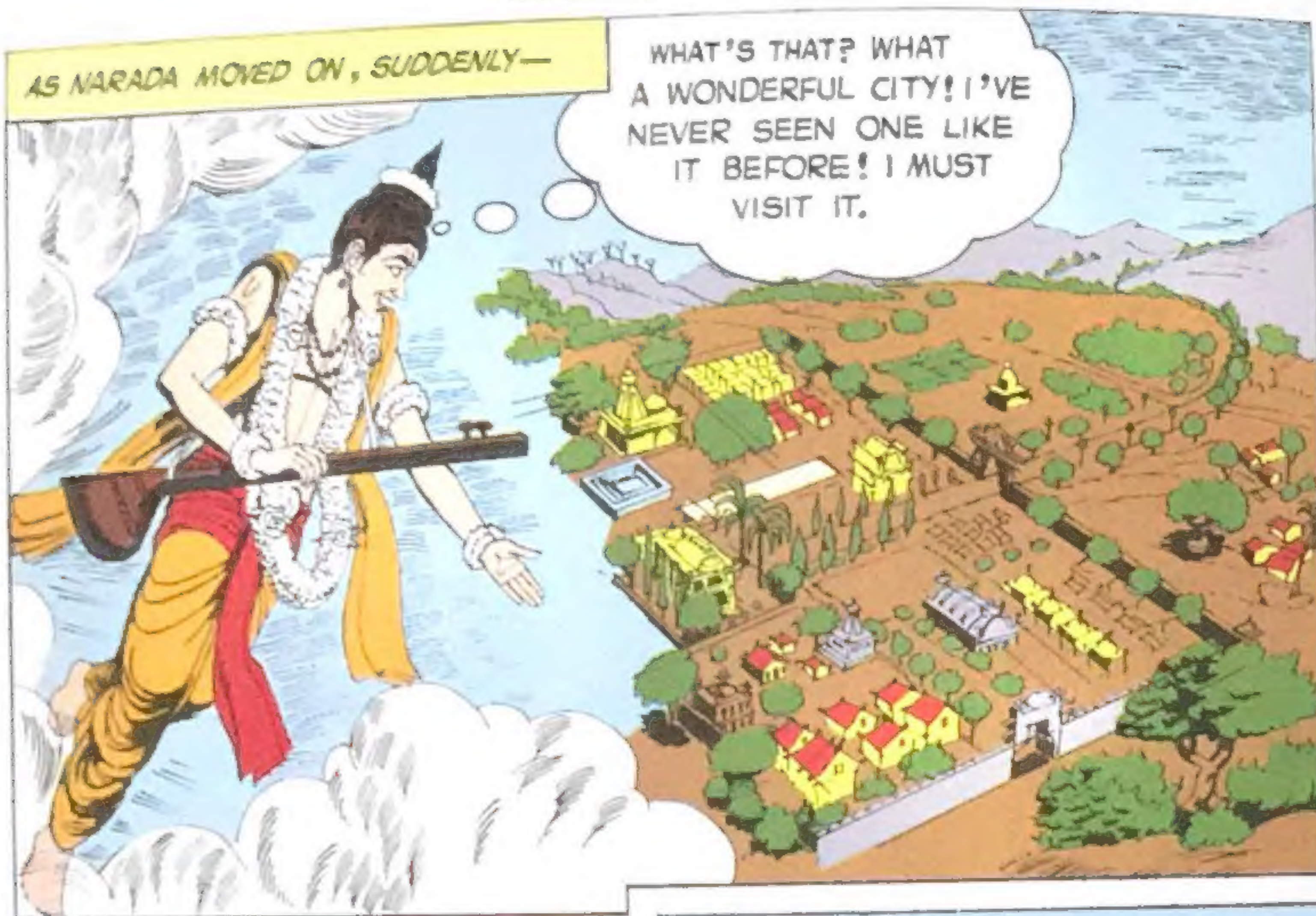
... AND A BEAUTIFUL APSARA * APPEARED BEFORE NARADA.



* CELESTIAL DAMSEL



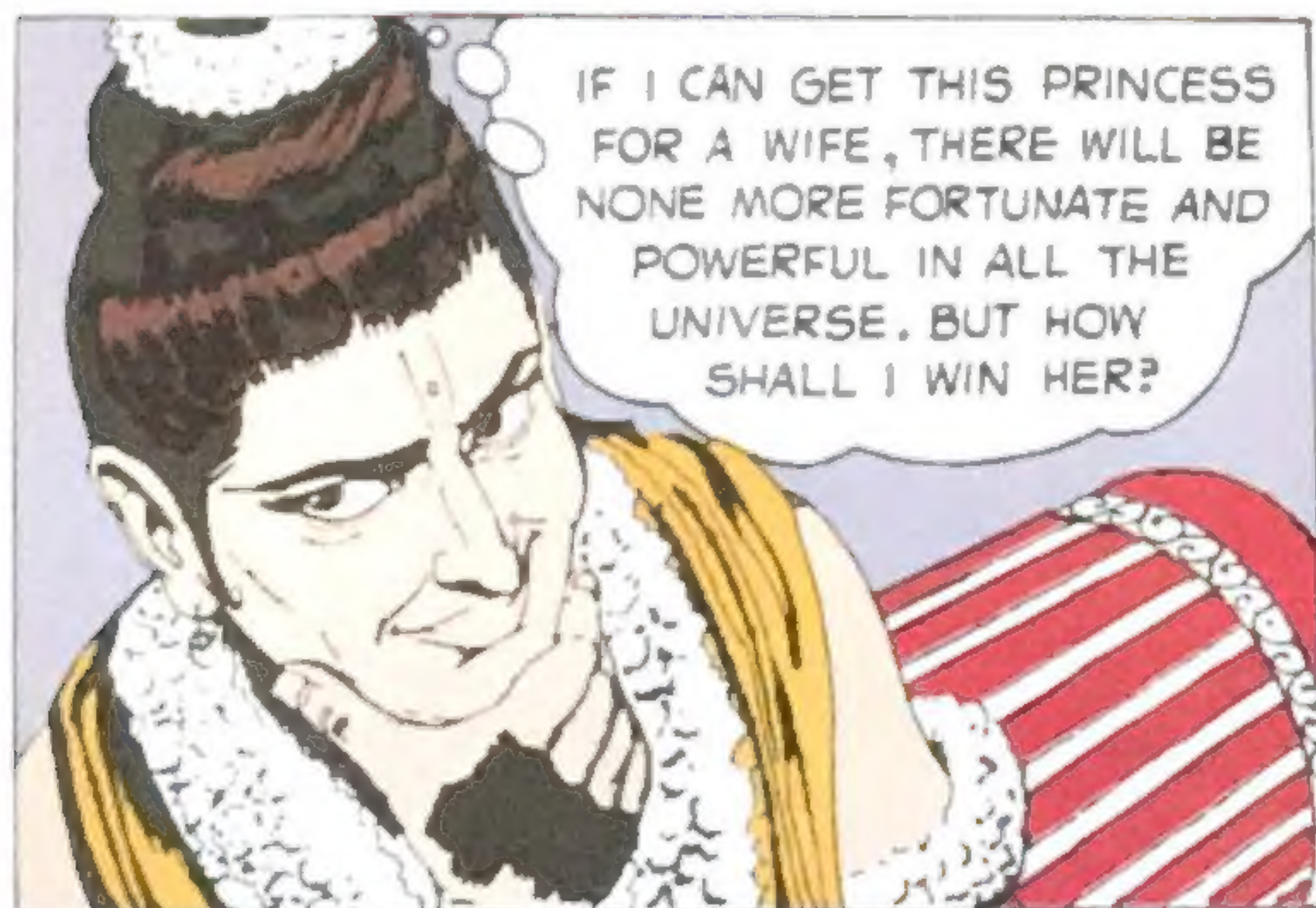




* THE GODDESS OF FORTUNE, VISHNU'S CONSORT ⊕ VISHNU



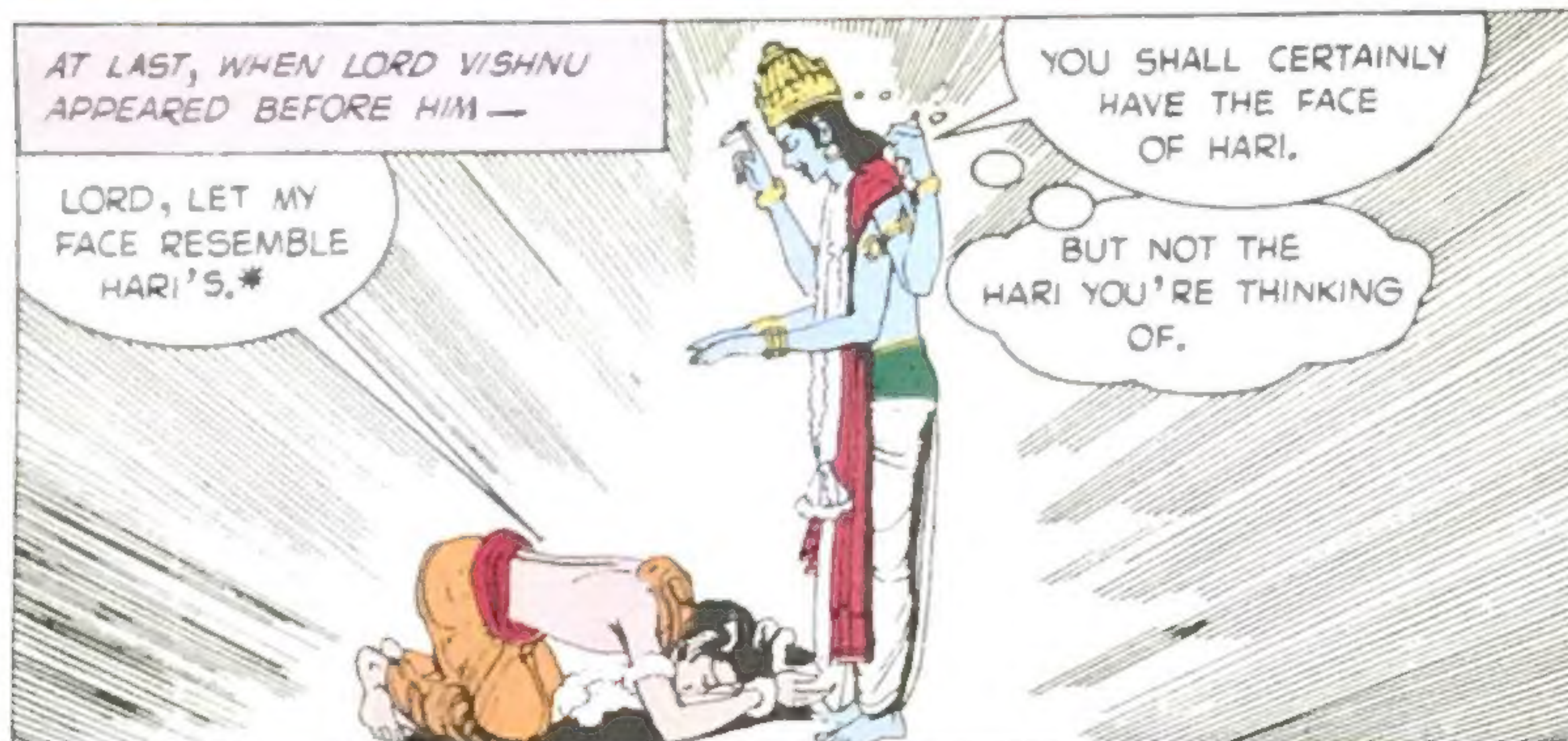
YOUR WORDS FILL OUR HEARTS WITH JOY. I CANNOT WAIT TO ANNOUNCE THE DATE OF HER SWAYAMVARA.



IF I CAN GET THIS PRINCESS FOR A WIFE, THERE WILL BE NONE MORE FORTUNATE AND POWERFUL IN ALL THE UNIVERSE. BUT HOW SHALL I WIN HER?



NARADA PRAYED FERVENTLY TO LORD VISHNU.



AT LAST, WHEN LORD VISHNU APPEARED BEFORE HIM —

LORD, LET MY FACE RESEMBLE HARI'S.*

YOU SHALL CERTAINLY HAVE THE FACE OF HARI.

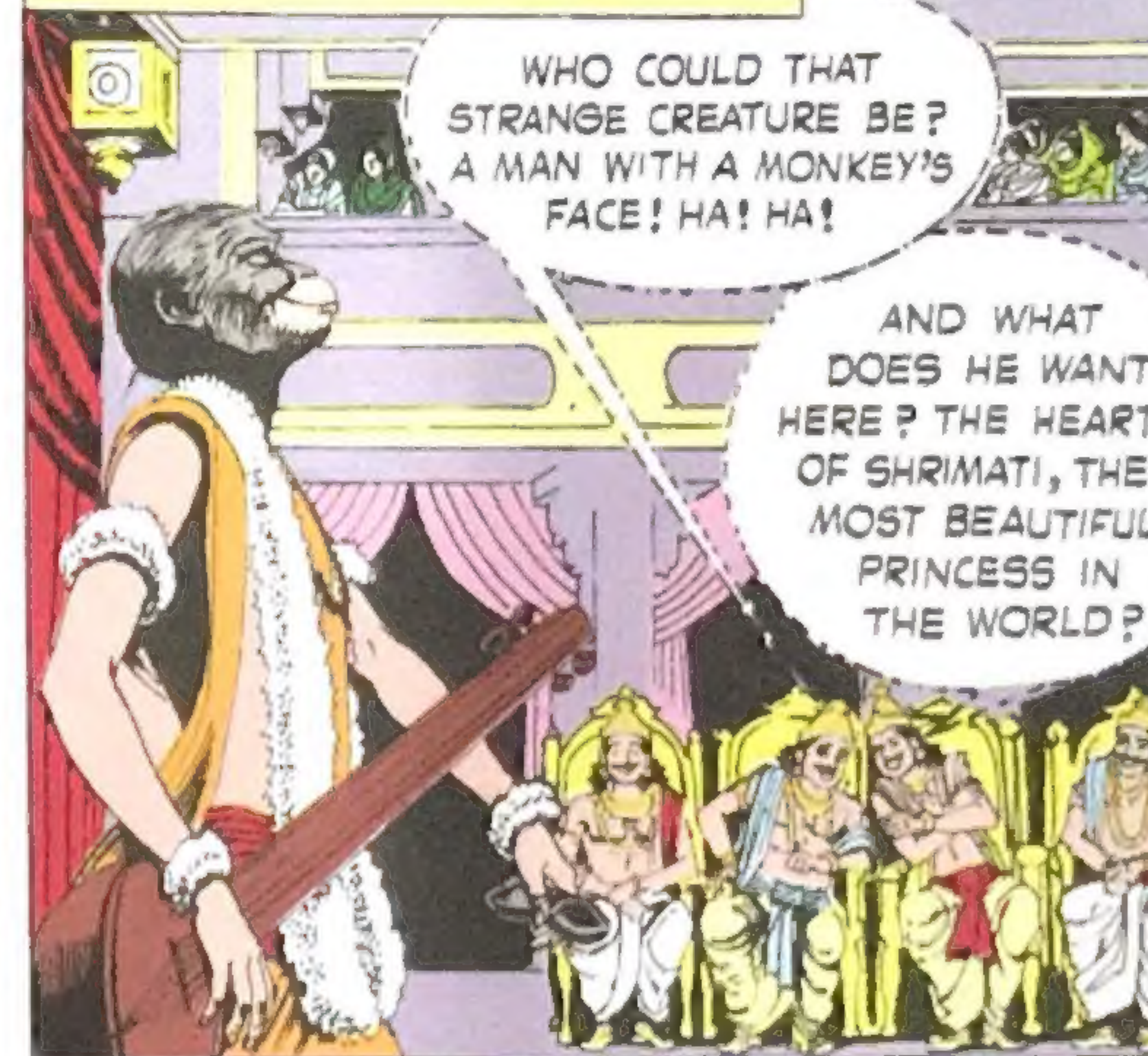
BUT NOT THE HARI YOU'RE THINKING OF.

* ANOTHER NAME FOR VISHNU

WHEN NARADA MADE HIS REQUEST HE HAD FORGOTTEN THAT THE WORD HARI ALSO MEANT A MONKEY! AND HE COULD NOT SEE HIS OWN FACE.

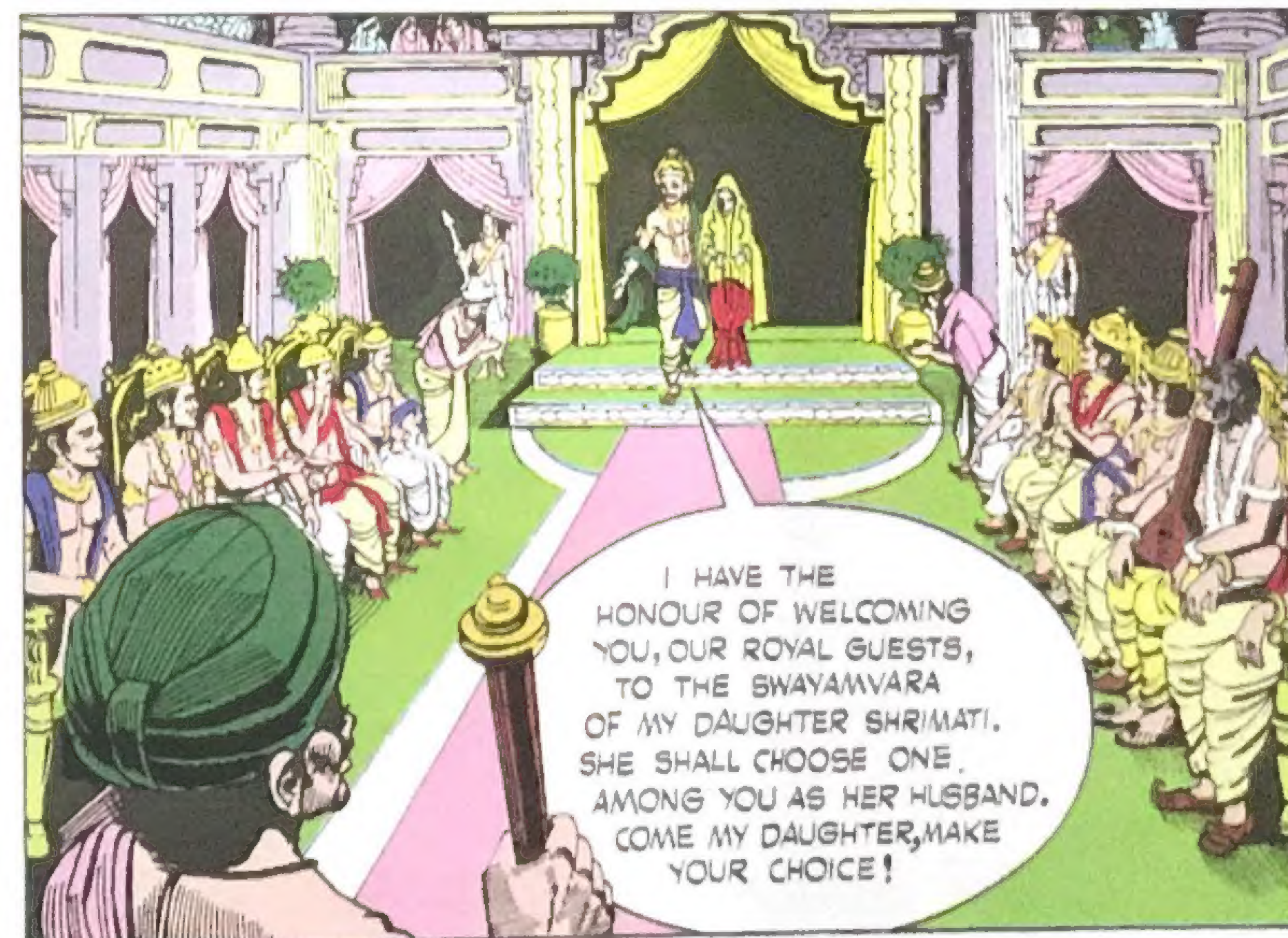


HE WENT TO THE SWAYAMVARA HALL FULL OF CONFIDENCE, SURE OF HIS VICTORY.



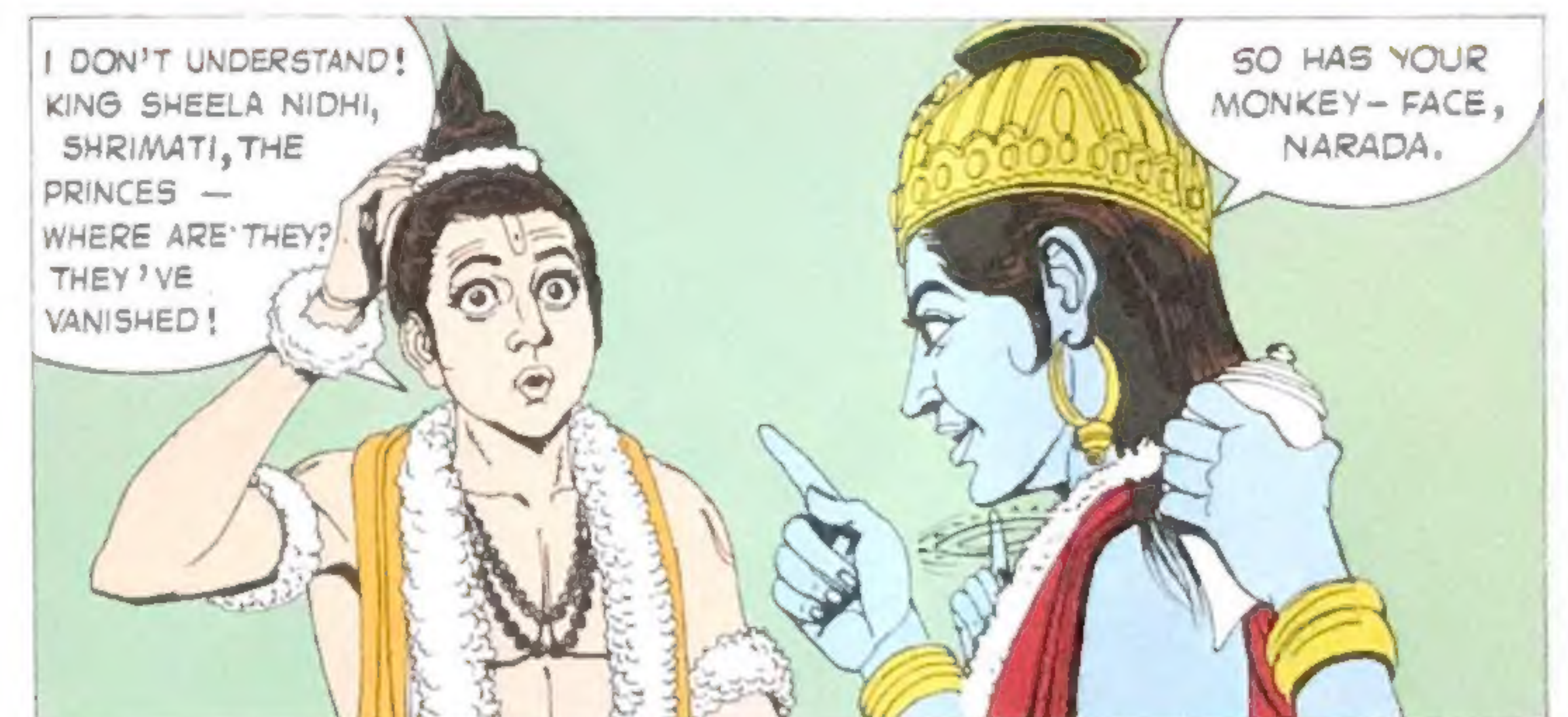
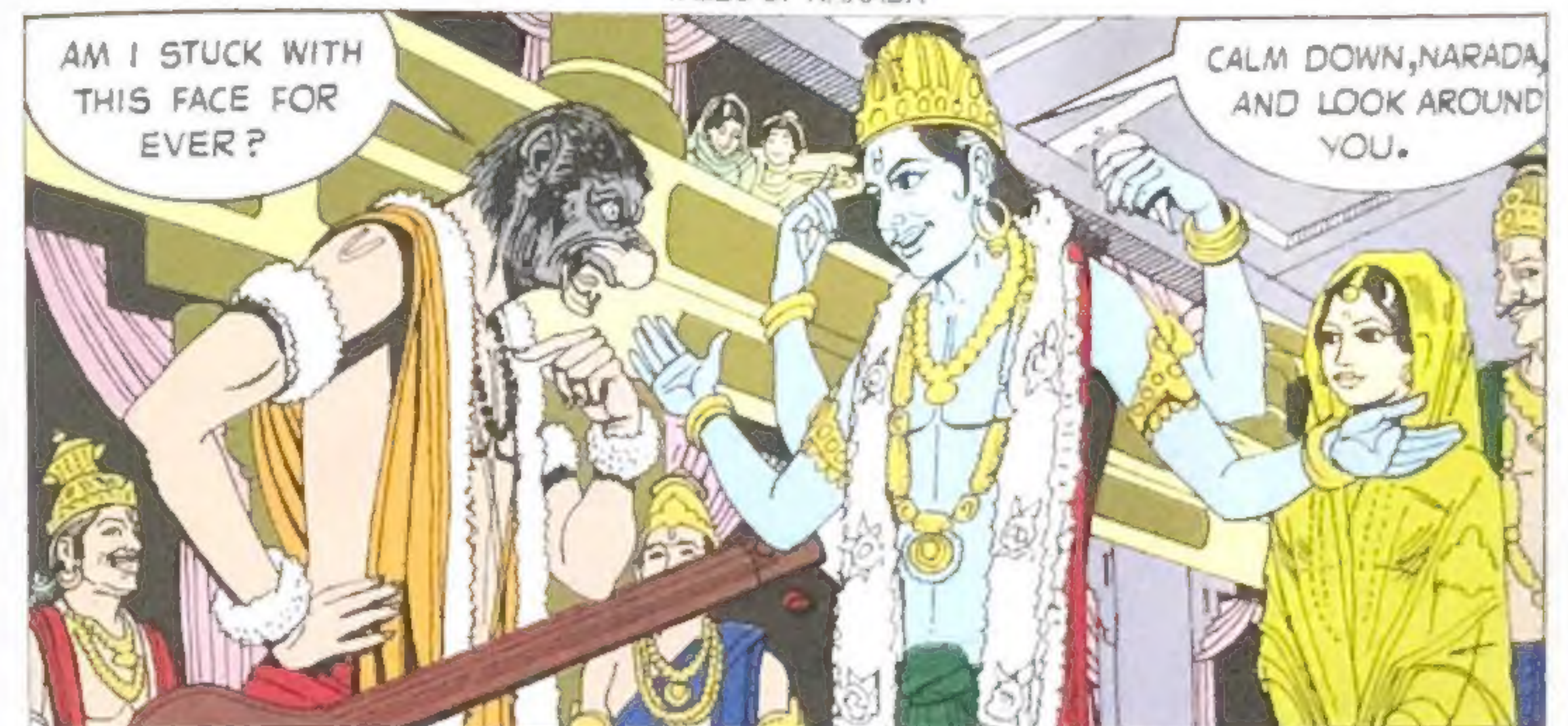
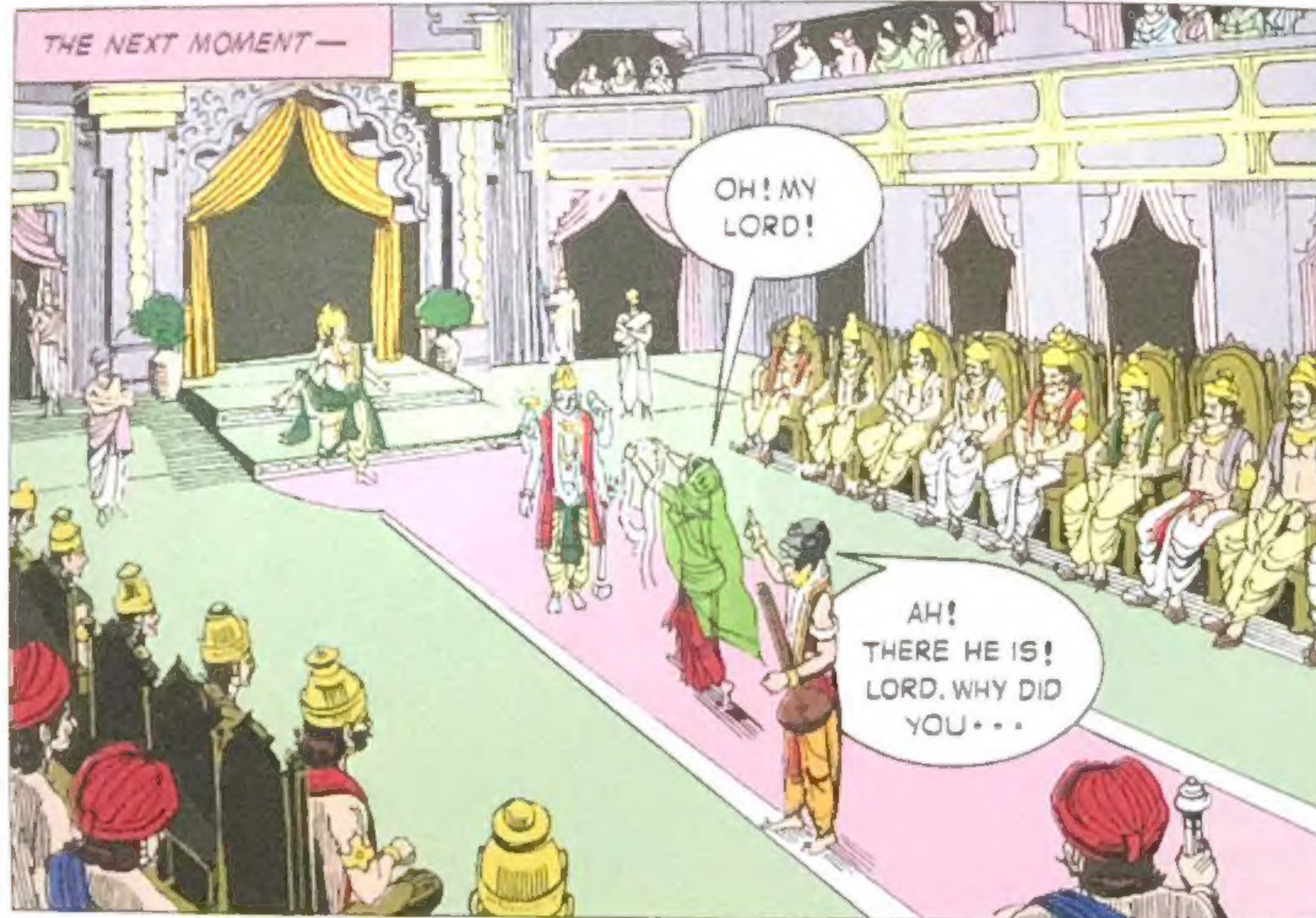
WHO COULD THAT STRANGE CREATURE BE? A MAN WITH A MONKEY'S FACE! HA! HA!

AND WHAT DOES HE WANT HERE? THE HEART OF SHRIMATI, THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS IN THE WORLD?

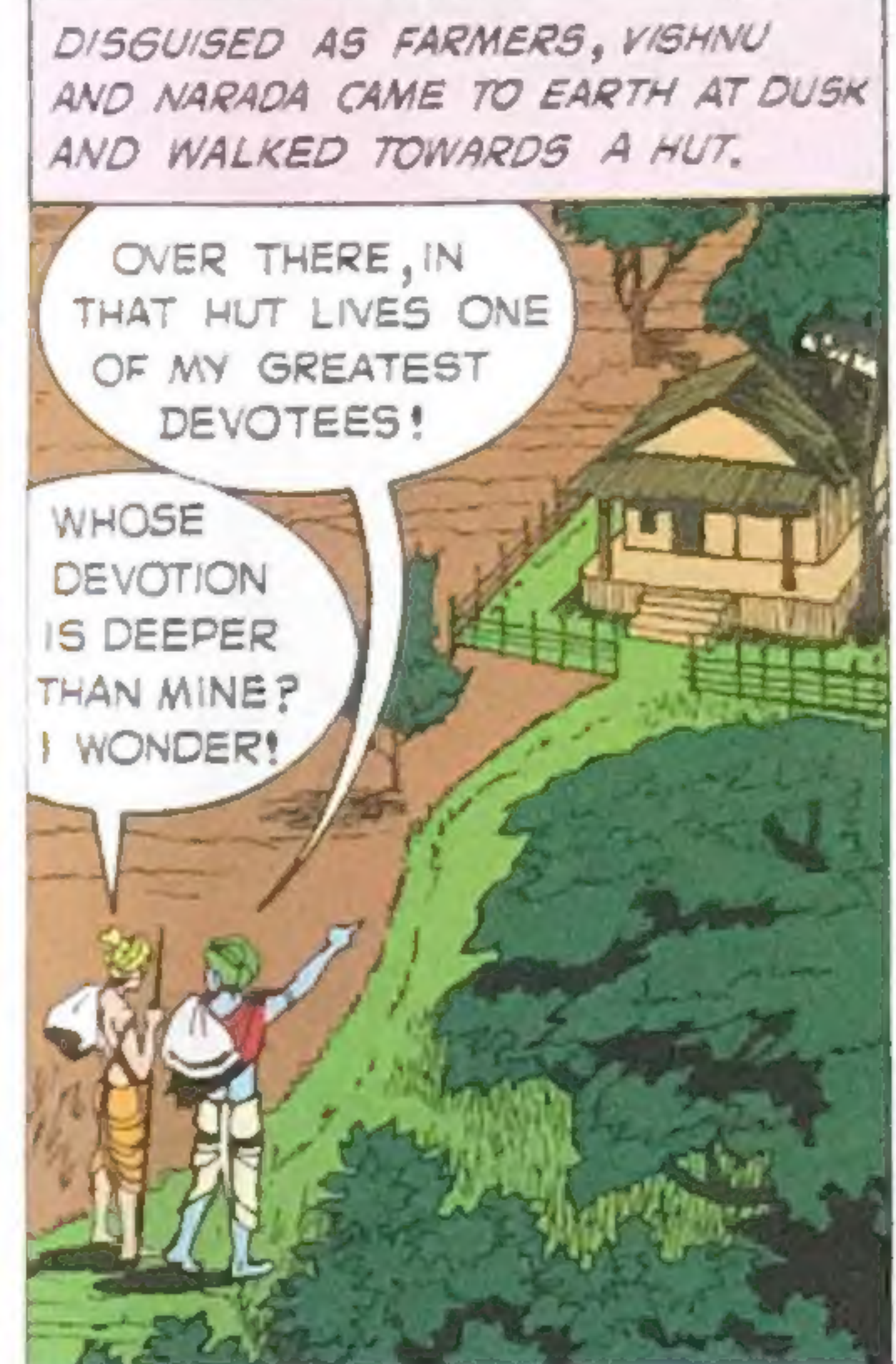
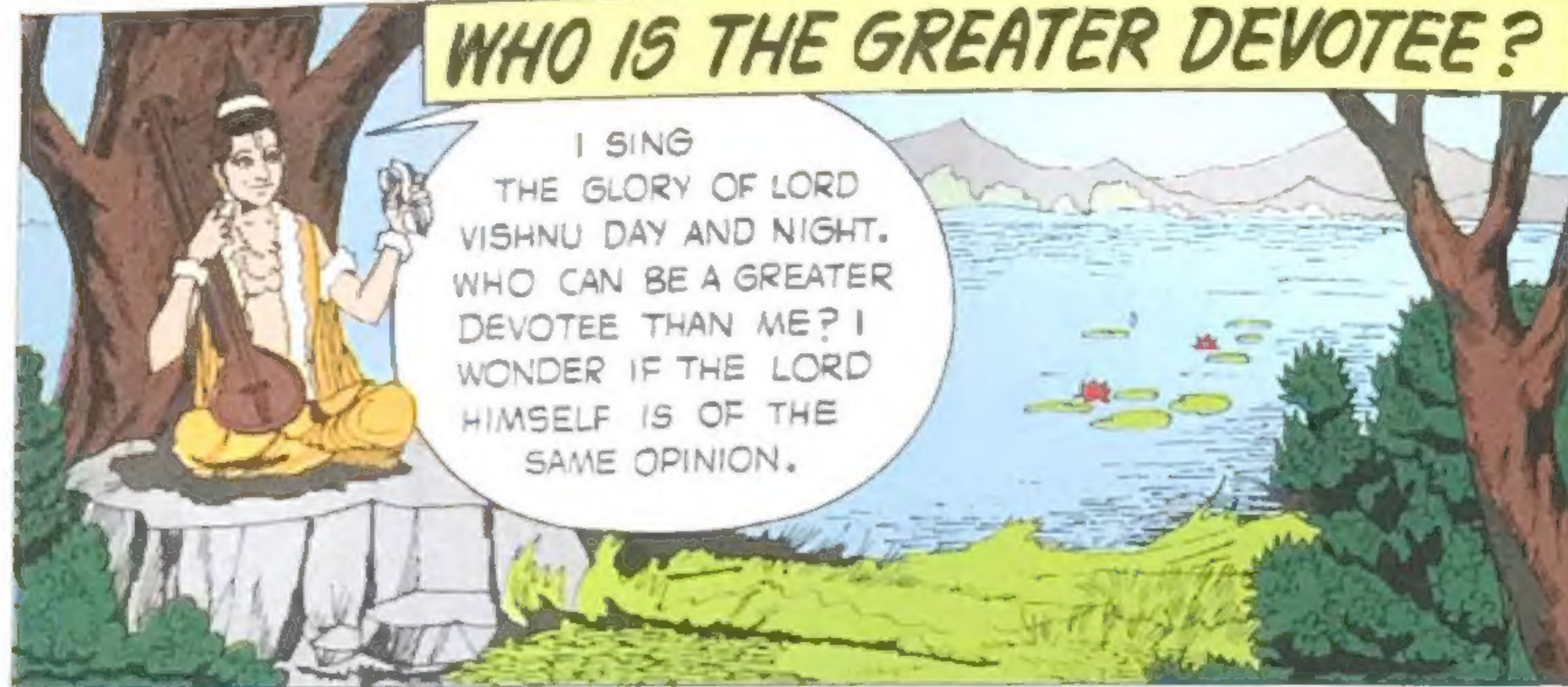


I HAVE THE HONOUR OF WELCOMING YOU, OUR ROYAL GUESTS, TO THE SWAYAMVARA OF MY DAUGHTER SHRIMATI. SHE SHALL CHOOSE ONE AMONG YOU AS HER HUSBAND. COME MY DAUGHTER, MAKE YOUR CHOICE!





WHO IS THE GREATER DEVOTEE?





NARAYANA,
NARAYANA!

WHERE
DO YOU COME
FROM? WHAT CAN
I DO FOR YOU?



WE WERE ON OUR
WAY TO THE CITY.
IT'LL SOON BE DARK
AND THE FOREST IS
INFESTED WITH WILD
ANIMALS. WE SEEK
SHELTER FOR A
NIGHT.

YOU ARE WELCOME
TO STAY WITH ME,
MY FRIENDS, AND
PARTAKE OF WHAT
MEAGRE FARE I CAN
OFFER YOU.



I AM GRATEFUL TO
GOD FOR GIVING ME
THIS OPPORTUNITY
TO SERVE HIM. PRAISED
BE HIS NAME!



THERE ARE TWO
GUESTS IN THE
HOUSE. PLEASE MAKE
SOME EXTRA
CHAPATIS.*

* UNLEAVENED BREAD



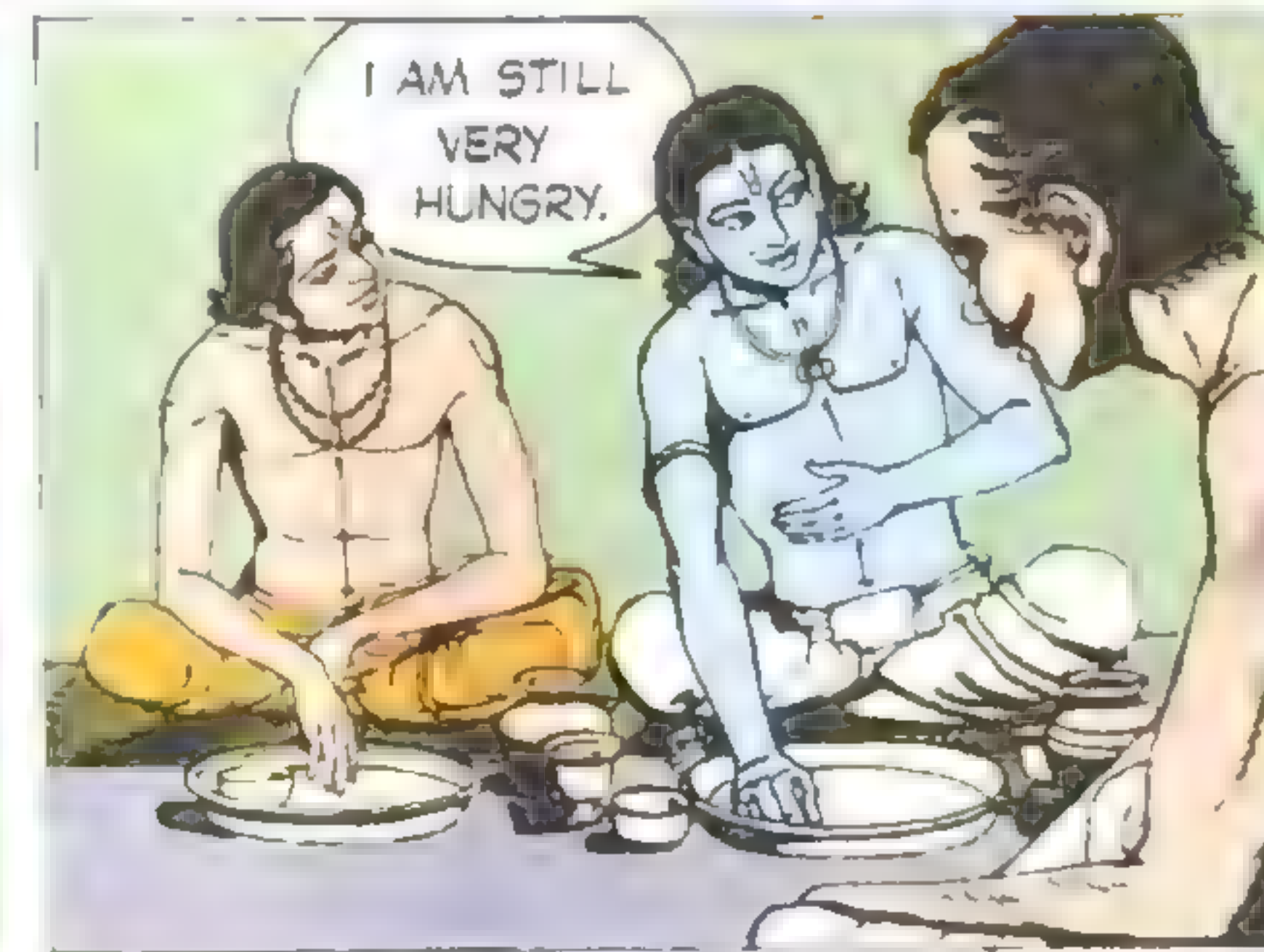
THIS IS ALL THE FLOUR
I HAVE, AND THE CHILDREN
ARE CLAMOURING FOR
MORE FOOD.

NEVER MIND!
THE GUESTS MUST
HAVE THEIR FILL.
MAKE SOME GRUEL
FOR THE
CHILDREN.



SOON AFTER THEY HAD FINISHED
EATING THE CHAPATIS —

HOW CAN
THIS SIMPLE
HOUSE-HOLDER BE
SUCH A GREAT
DEVOTEE.



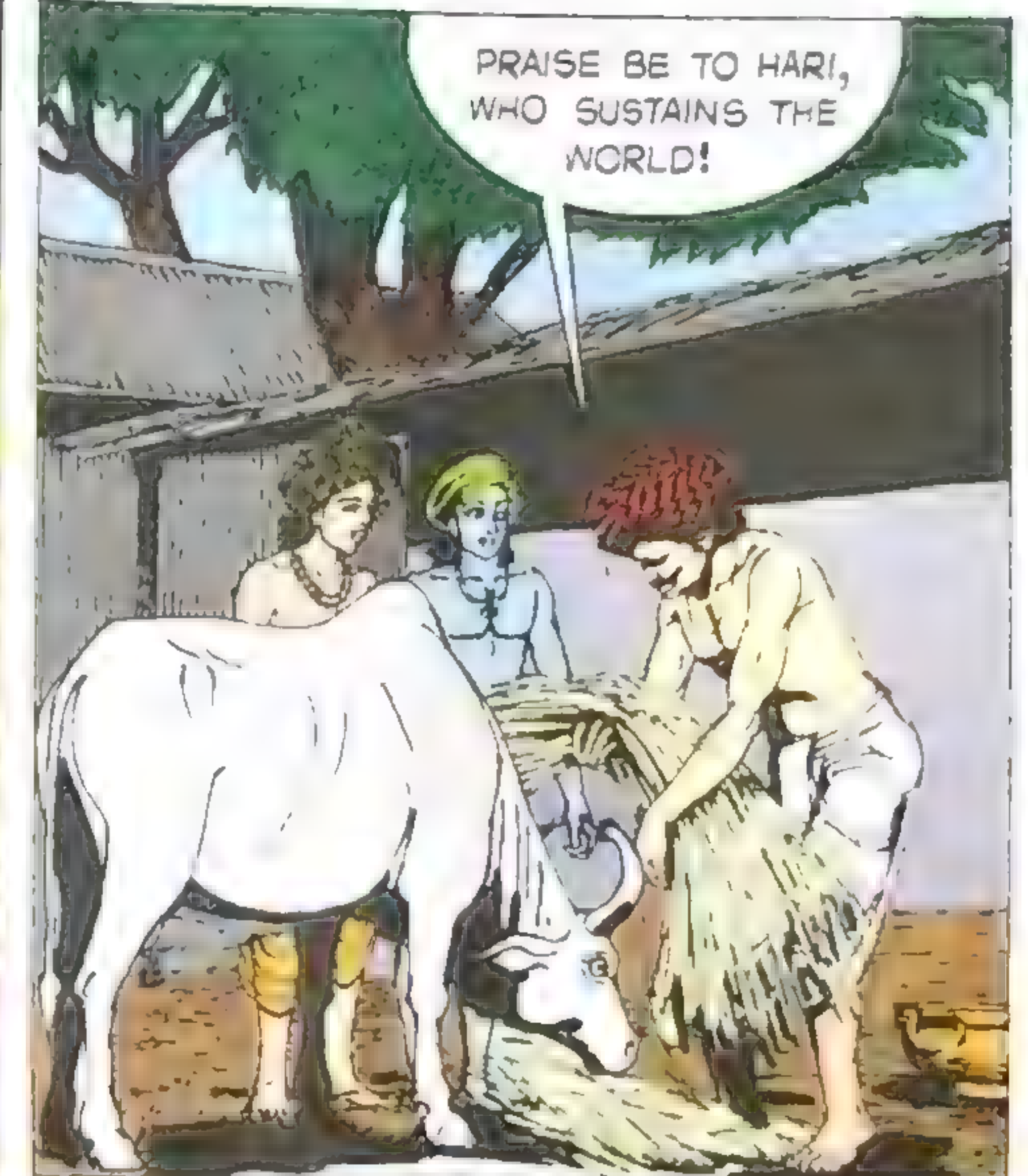
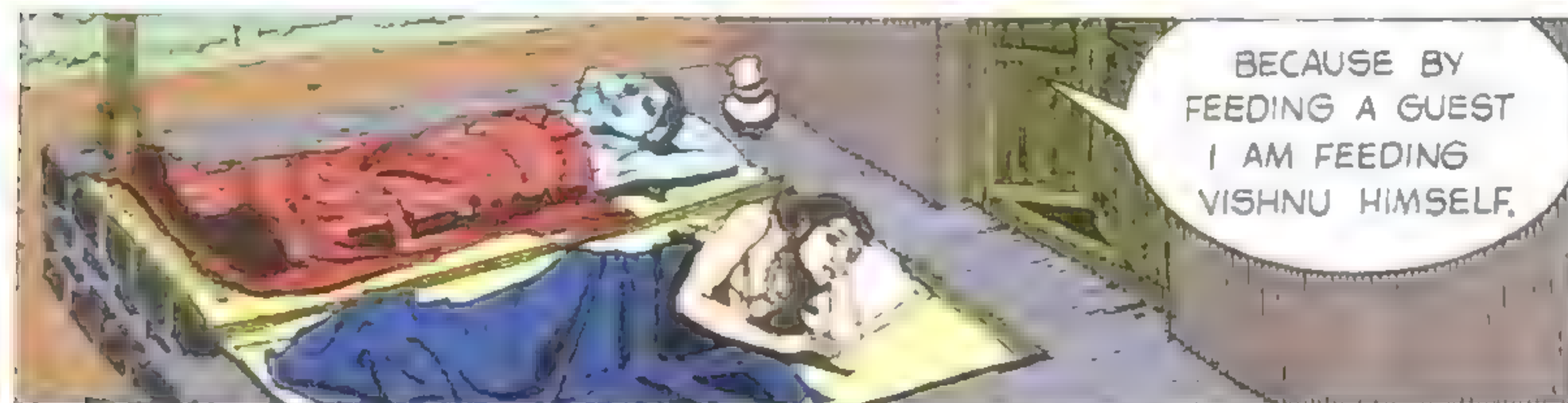
I AM STILL
VERY
HUNGRY.

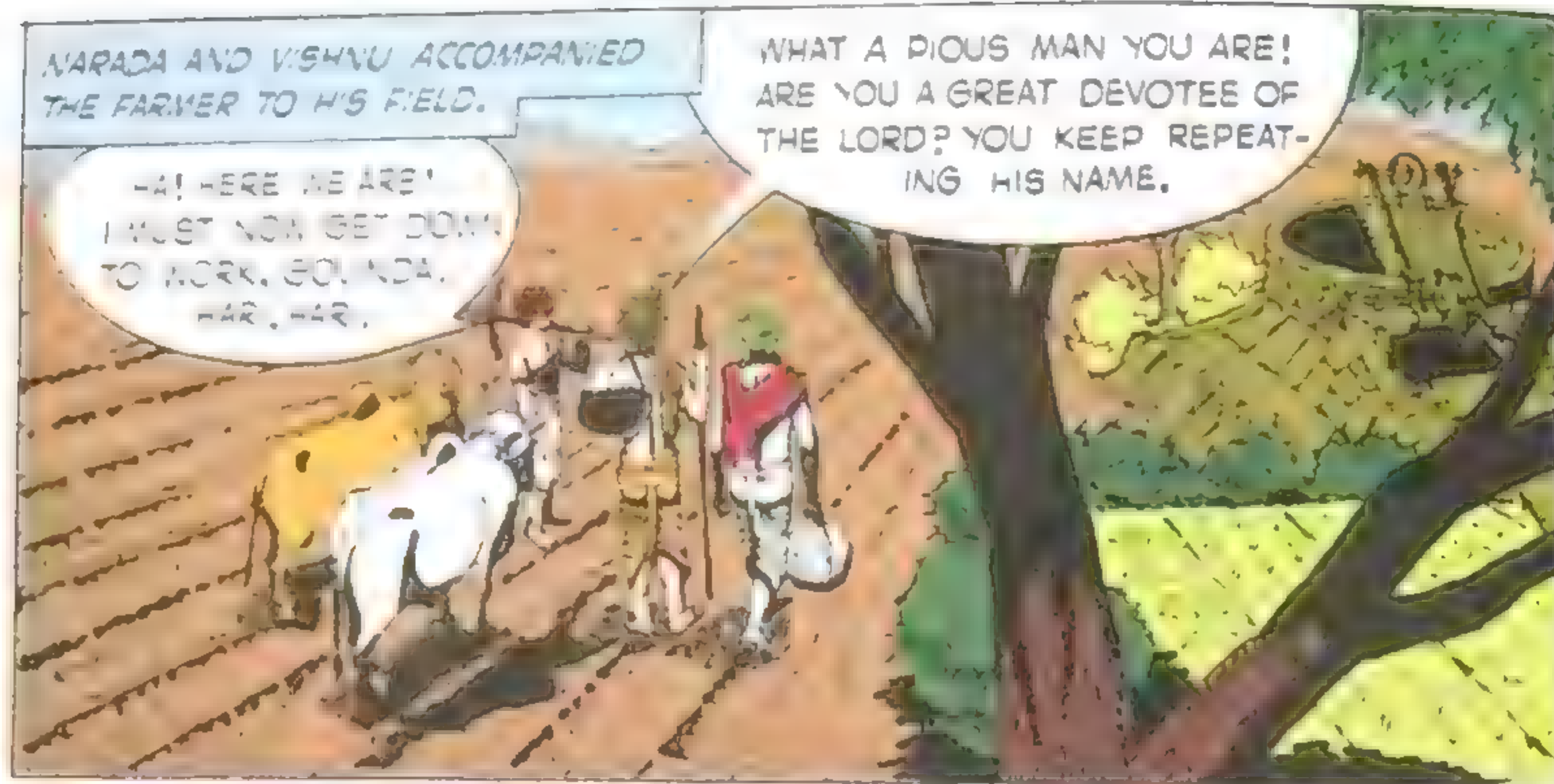


THE FARMER
WENT TO THE
KITCHEN.

IS THERE ANY
FOOD LEFT?

NOTHING, EXCEPT
THE GRUEL I COOKED
FOR THE CHILDREN.





NARADA AND VISHNU ACCOMPANIED THE FARMER TO HIS FIELD.

"HAI! HERE WE ARE! I MUST NOW GET DOWN TO WORK, GOVINDA. HAR, HAR."

WHAT A PIOUS MAN YOU ARE! ARE YOU A GREAT DEVOTEE OF THE LORD? YOU KEEP REPEATING HIS NAME.



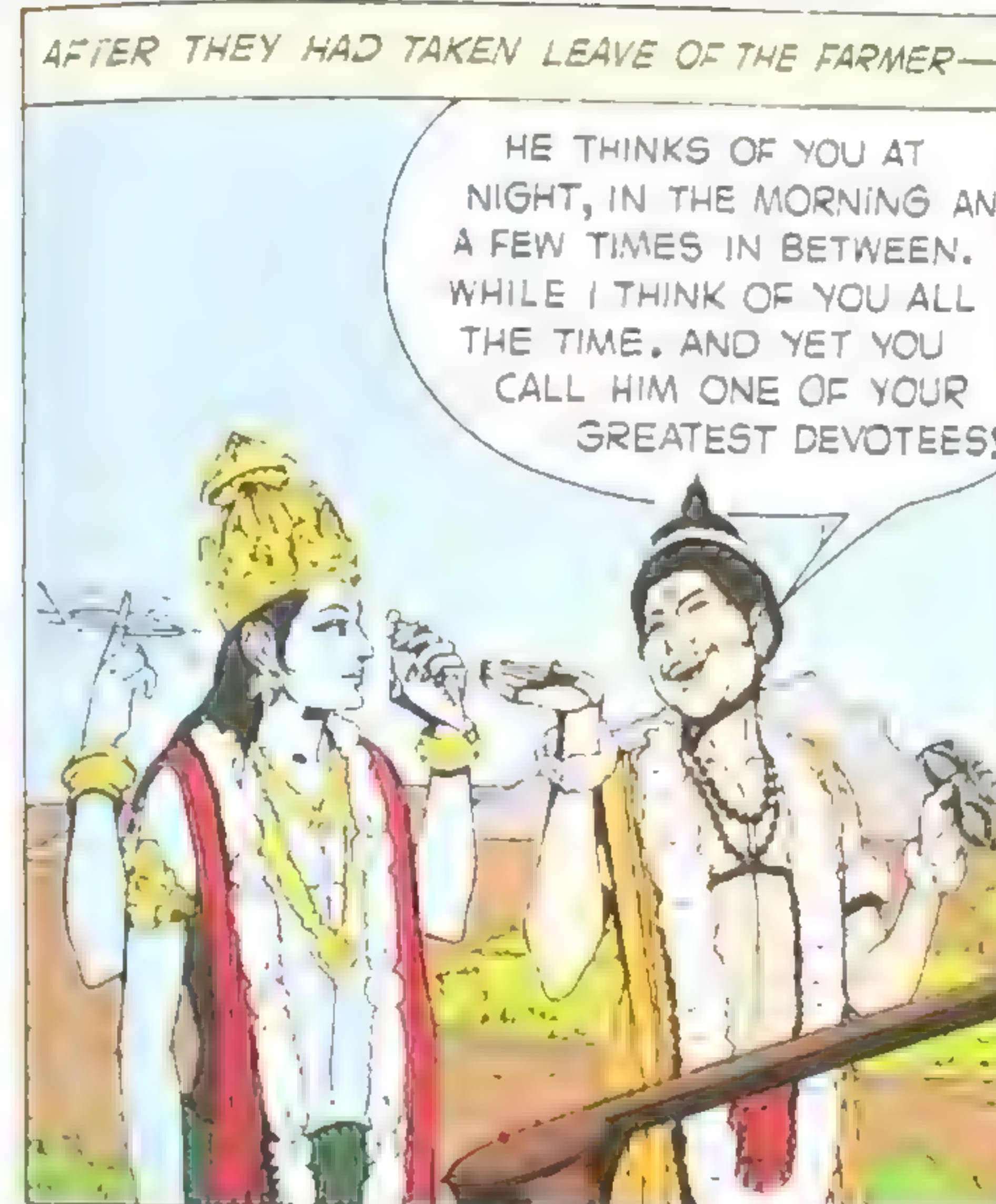
I REMEMBER HIS GLORIOUS NAME AS OFTEN AS MY WORK PERMITS.

HOW OFTEN WOULD THAT BE?



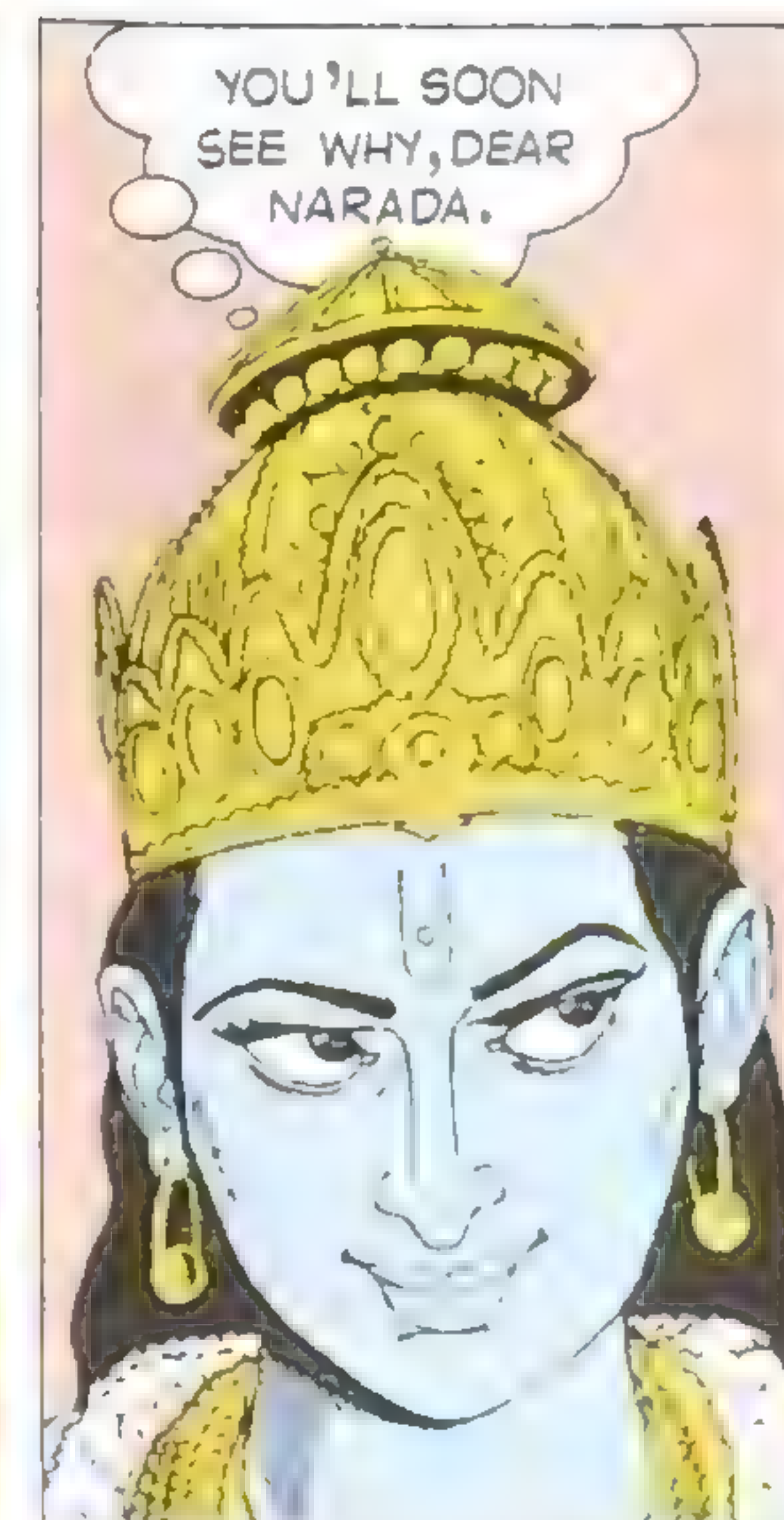
WELL, I THINK OF HARI AS I GET UP, BEFORE I GO TO BED, AND AS MANY TIMES IN BETWEEN AS MY WORK PERMITS.

I SEE.

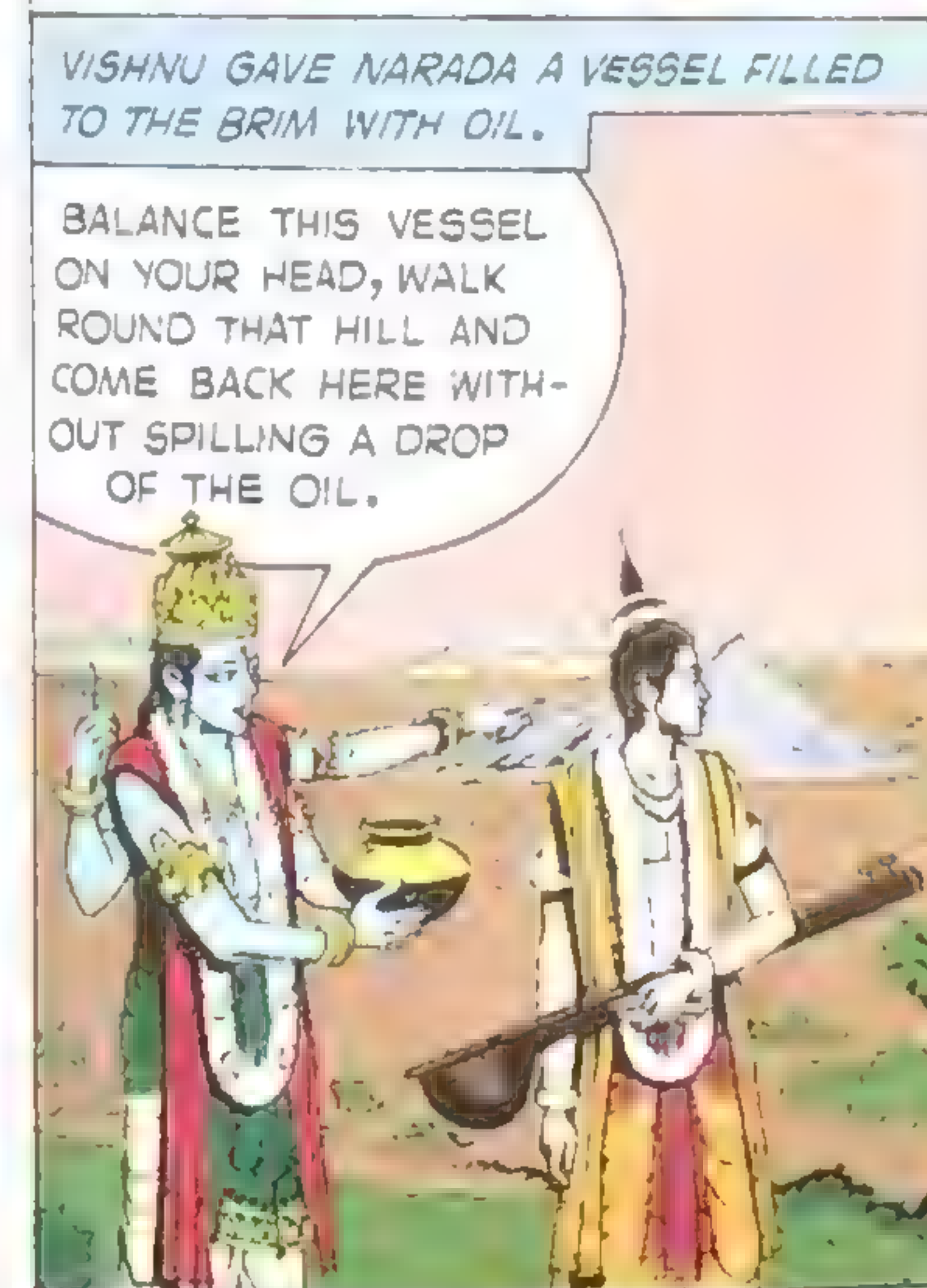


AFTER THEY HAD TAKEN LEAVE OF THE FARMER—

HE THINKS OF YOU AT NIGHT, IN THE MORNING AND A FEW TIMES IN BETWEEN. WHILE I THINK OF YOU ALL THE TIME. AND YET YOU CALL HIM ONE OF YOUR GREATEST DEVOTEES!



YOU'LL SOON SEE WHY, DEAR NARADA.



VISHNU GAVE NARADA A VESSEL FILLED TO THE BRIM WITH OIL.

BALANCE THIS VESSEL ON YOUR HEAD, WALK ROUND THAT HILL AND COME BACK HERE WITHOUT SPILLING A DROP OF THE OIL.



IT WON'T BE EASY, BUT WITH YOUR GRACE IS THERE ANYTHING THAT CANNOT BE ACCOMPLISHED?

AND NARADA SET OFF.



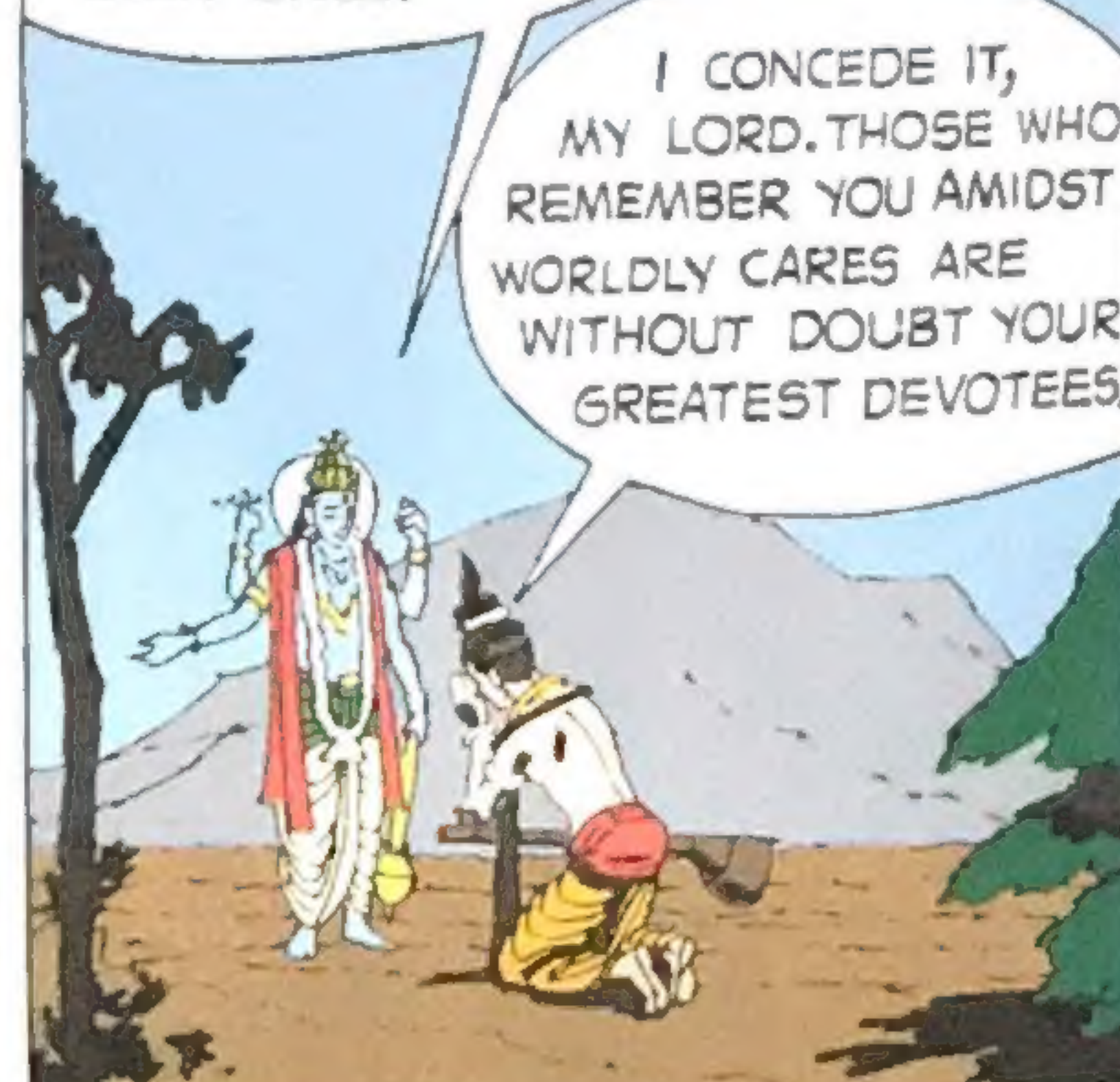
AH! AH! THAT WAS A CLOSE CALL! HAD I SLIPPED, THE OIL WOULD HAVE SPILT. I MUST BE MORE CAREFUL.



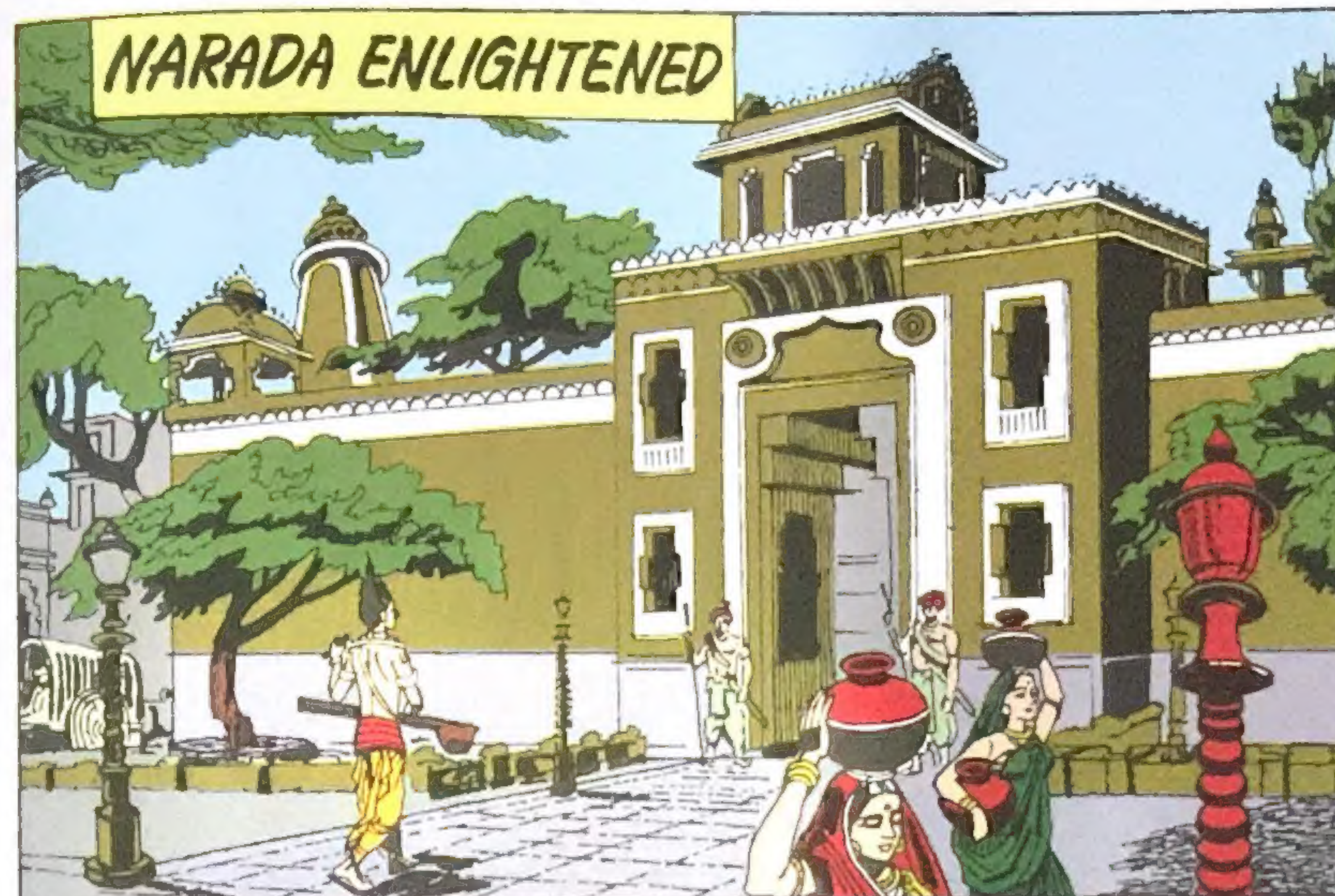
WHEN NARADA SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE ROUND—



THAT FARMER HAS HARD WORK TO DO. YET HE REMEMBERS ME — AT LEAST A FEW TIMES. WHILE YOU COULD NOT REMEMBER ME EVEN ONCE!



NARADA ENLIGHTENED



THE CELESTIAL SAGE, NARADA, ONCE CAME TO DWARAKA, TO SEE LORD KRISHNA.

WELCOME, NARADA. WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?



* ILLUSION



BOTH KRISHNA AND NARADA LEFT DWARAKA...

...AND KEPT WALKING TILL THEY CAME TO A DESERT.

WHERE ARE WE GOING?
HOW CAN I EXPERIENCE
MAYA IN A DESERT,
KRISHNA?

BE PATIENT,
NARADA.

AFTER THEY HAD WALKED A GOOD DISTANCE, KRISHNA SUDDENLY STOPPED.

I CAN'T WALK ANY
FURTHER, NARADA. MY
THROAT IS PARCHED.
TAKE THIS ...AND
FETCH ME ...SOME...
WATER.

HOLD ON,
KRISHNA.
I'LL BE BACK
SOON.

NARADA WENT IN SEARCH OF WATER.

IT LOOKS LIKE
A SETTLEMENT
THERE.

AH! A
WELL!

OH! WHAT A
DIVINE
BEAUTY!

LADY, WILL YOU GIVE ME
SOME WATER TO
QUENCH MY THIRST?

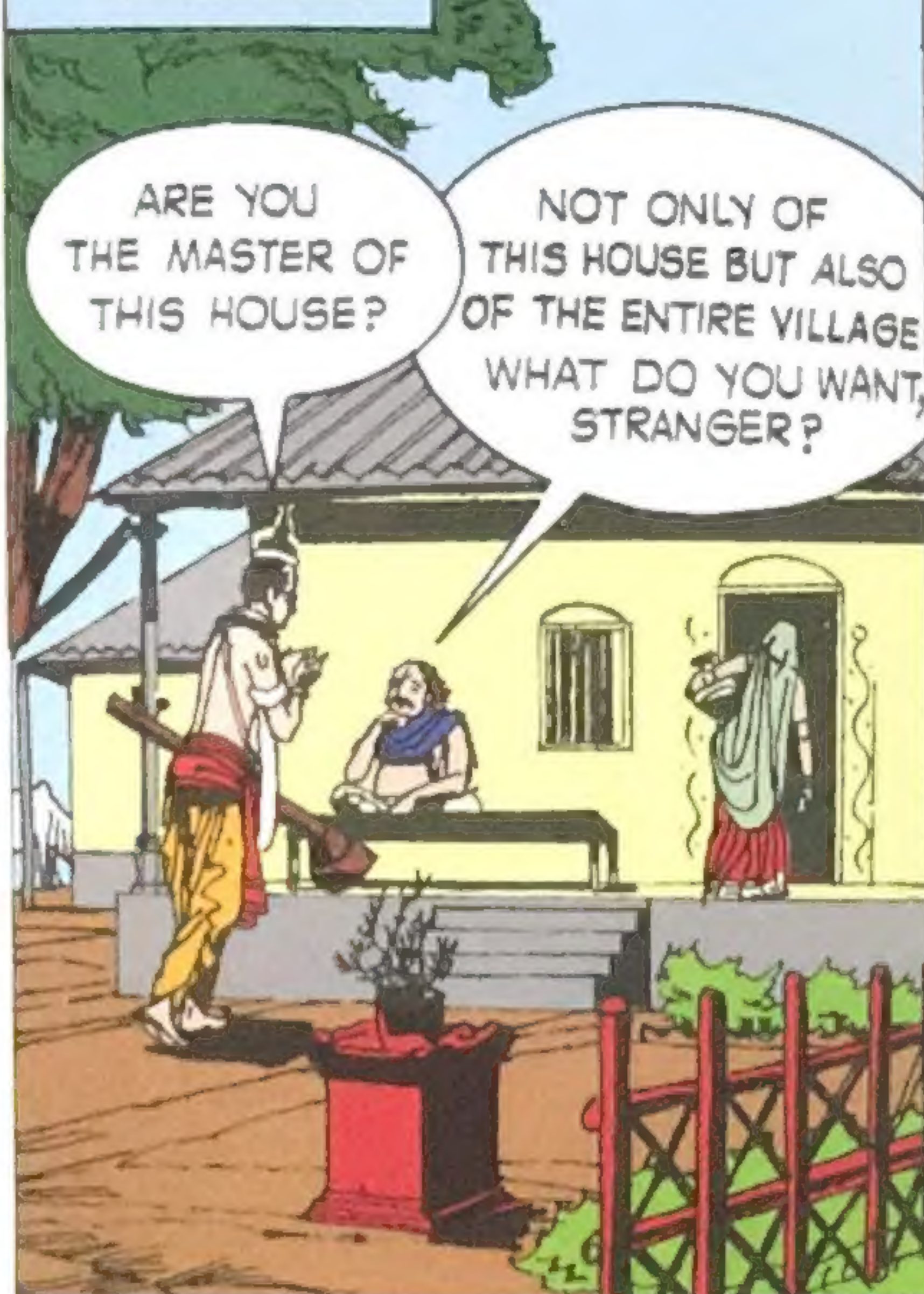
BY ALL
MEANS,
SIR.

SHE MUST
BE A
GODDESS!

NARADA FOLLOWED THE DAMSEL...

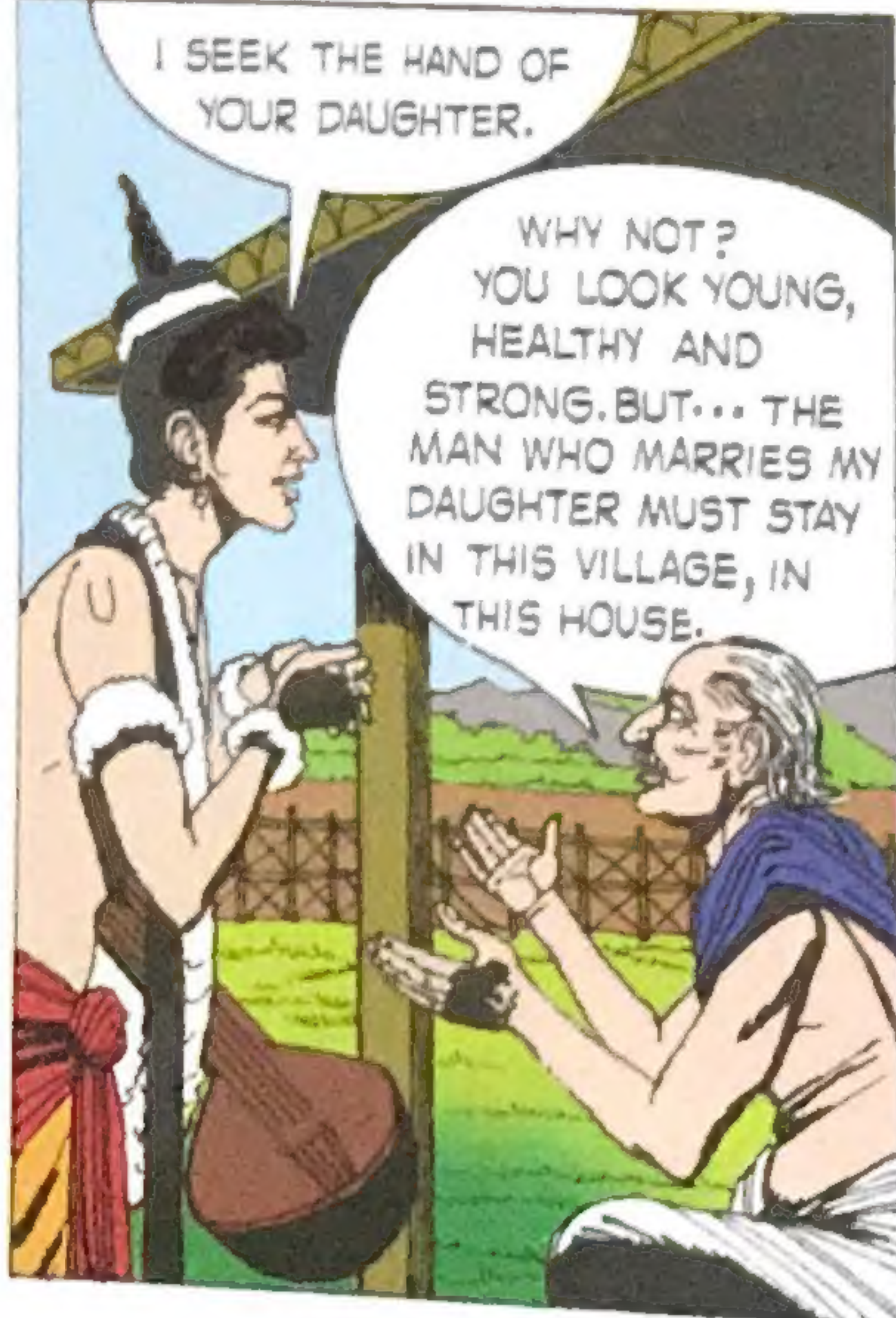


...TO HER HOUSE.



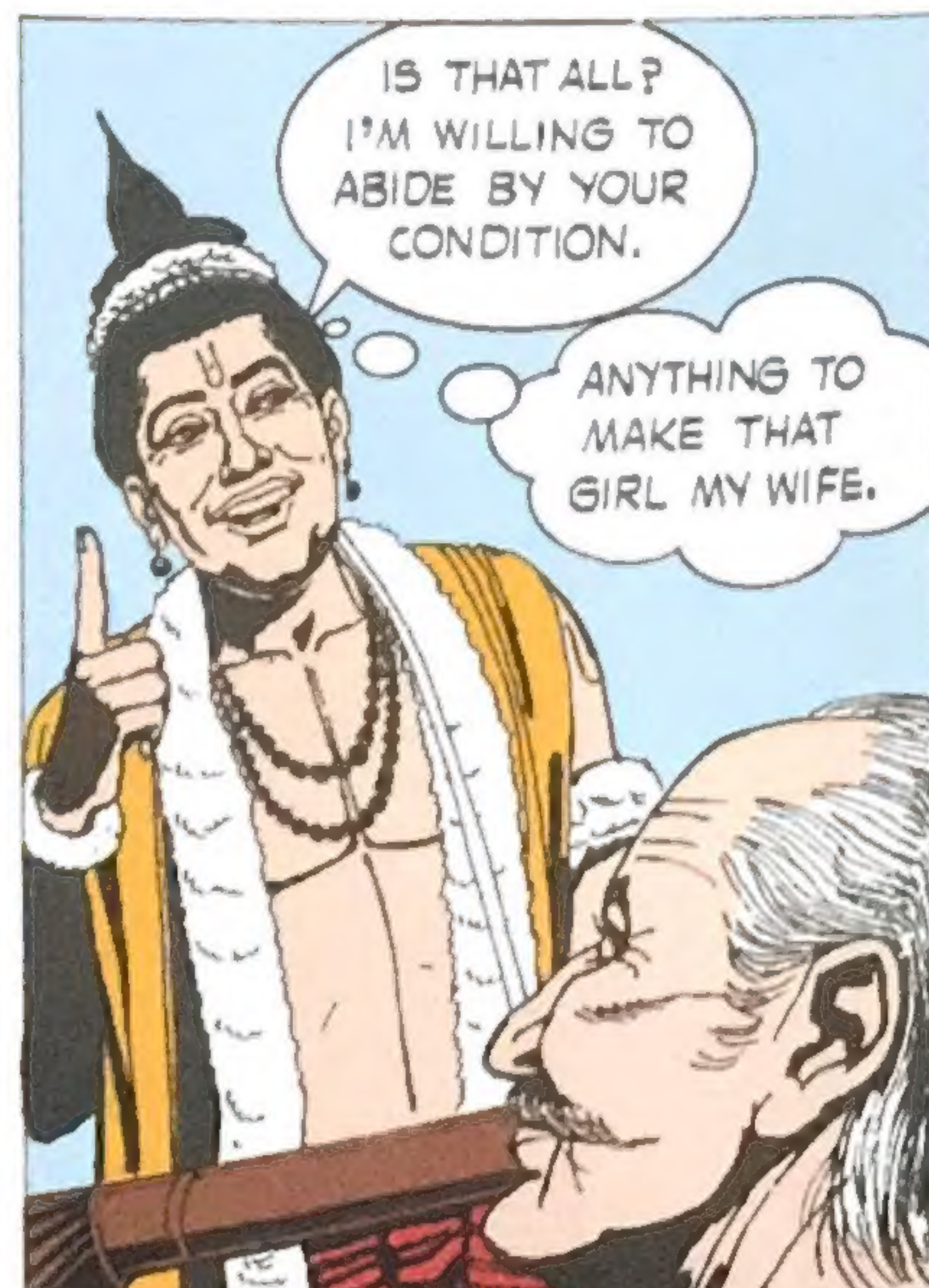
ARE YOU THE MASTER OF THIS HOUSE?

NOT ONLY OF THIS HOUSE BUT ALSO OF THE ENTIRE VILLAGE. WHAT DO YOU WANT, STRANGER?



I SEEK THE HAND OF YOUR DAUGHTER.

WHY NOT? YOU LOOK YOUNG, HEALTHY AND STRONG. BUT... THE MAN WHO MARRIES MY DAUGHTER MUST STAY IN THIS VILLAGE, IN THIS HOUSE.



IS THAT ALL? I'M WILLING TO ABIDE BY YOUR CONDITION.

ANYTHING TO MAKE THAT GIRL MY WIFE.

THE MARRIAGE SOON TOOK PLACE.



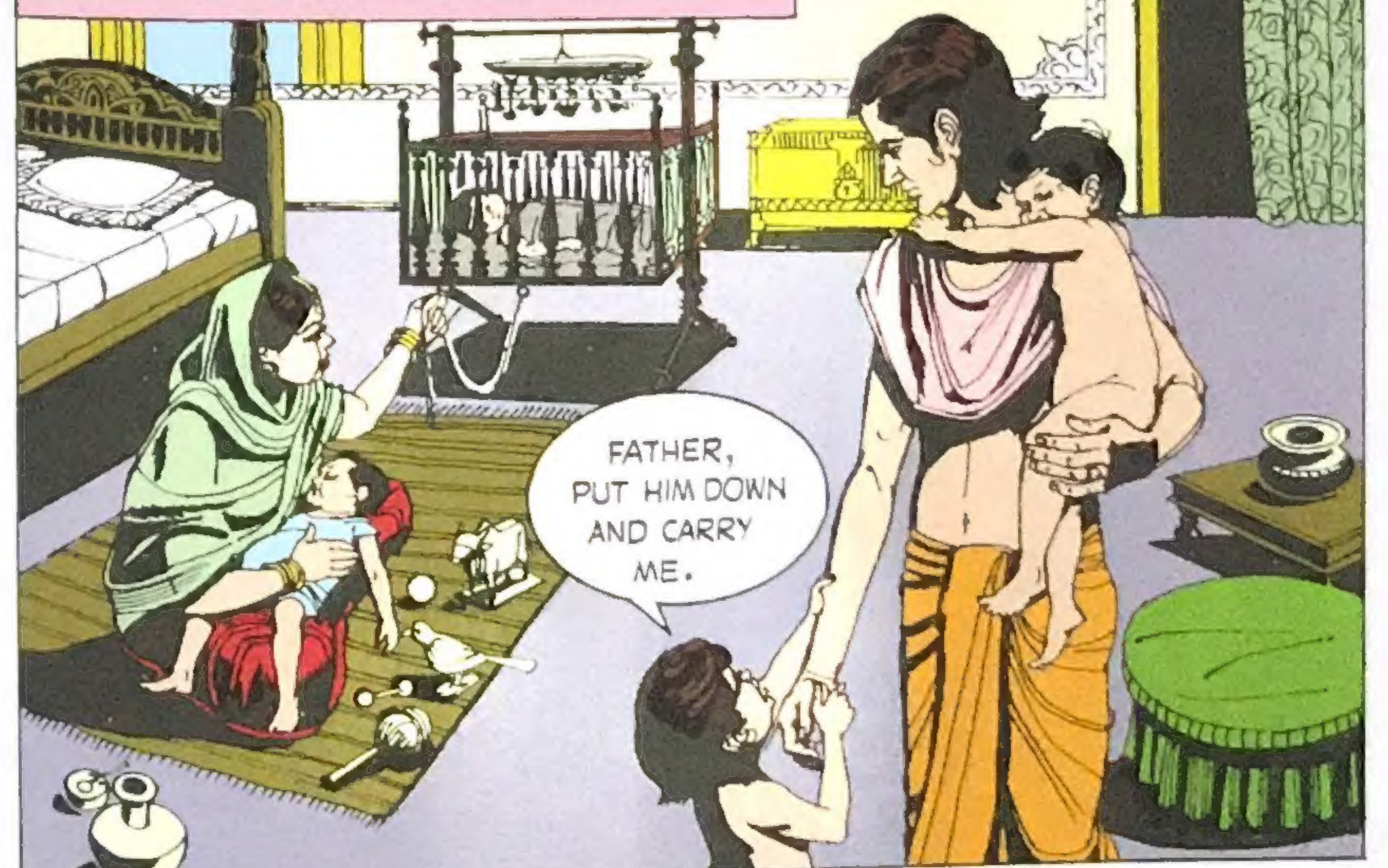
SOON AFTER THE MARRIAGE, THE OLD CHIEFTAIN DIED. NARADA HAD TO ASSUME HIS TITLE AND HIS RESPONSIBILITIES.

I WANT THE WORK FINISHED BY EVENING.

IT WILL BE DONE, MASTER.



NARADA WAS BLESSED WITH FOUR CHILDREN.



FATHER, PUT HIM DOWN AND CARRY ME.

WHEN NARADA WAS AT THE PEAK OF HIS SUCCESS, DISASTER CAME IN THE FORM OF CYCLONIC WINDS, RAIN AND FLOODS.



NARADA PUT HIS FAMILY INTO A BOAT AND TRIED TO KEEP AFLOAT, ON THE SWIRLING WATERS.



BUT THE BOAT CAPSIZED. NARADA TRIED IN VAIN TO SAVE HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN.



A HUGE WAVE THREW NARADA ON TO THE SHORE.



SUDDENLY, HE HEARD A VOICE.



NARADA TURNED AND BEHELD KRISHNA.

